I.Kubat

A CERTIFIED LETTER

“Exeo in a spasm”

Samuel Beckett “Enueg I”

To my youth

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Lodz, Poland 2009

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D,

Before you read it just a note to let you know what happened to me one day when I was already well ahead into this letter. There was some failure in the computer and a fairly big part of it was deleted, the rest reminding more of scrambled eggs (maybe that's what it really is, after all) than a comprehensible piece of writing.

I was struck dumb when I detected this. I didn't have any notes (apart from the prologue which I had written years ago), neither did I copy it on a floppy disk. I faced the collapse of all the words I strenuously set together to convey so much to you. I'll only add that I used to work on it frantically in the scarce moments of my free time, usually at nights. Then it suddenly became like a half ready jigsaw puzzle scattered by a careless child.

First, I literally started to pull my hair out. Then I wanted to throw the bloody machine out of the window.

And then I thought of Zorba, the Greek.

Though it may seem funny to you this piece of paper means as much to me as his mine to him. Perhaps even more - it's one of the most important things in my life. So I had to begin afresh. I had to reproduce it from the hard disk of my brain. I clenched my teeth and started to reconstruct it, to piece it together like a neurosurgeon might piece together broken nerves. All that time I was clinging to

Zorba's tune. I wanted to keep it, cuddle it to me as if it were a small animal. And it grew. Into something bigger than myself. It gave me strength.

I was surprised how much I remembered by heart. This letter filled me to the finger tips. I only had to let my hand loose. I realised also that I couldn't re-create some fragments; that, probably, they were irrevocably lost. Obviously, I mourned them but, somehow, I also felt that the whole happening suited well the general theme of things past reclaim.

So no more talking.
Come on, let's dance.

Prologue

I remember standing at a tram stop in the middle of the city. Early morning. The beginning of spring which only starts to break through the petrol fumes and the continuous hum of cars. It is as if mouthfuls of fresh air filtered through the thick network of traction cables, car bonnets and people's faces. It might be any big industrial town in the world. Mine has the advantage of being comfortably settled on a large upland, though it lacks a river.

I remember the taste and the smell of this day in my early youth. The cloudless sky and the sun hidden somewhere behind the buildings though its silent presence can be clearly felt. It permeates the whole scene from behind as if through a barrier which is only unilaterally pervious. I heard that some tissues of the organism have such properties. The sunrays are reflected by metal tracks but the air is still cool. It fills freely a big niche made of the road with two carriageways adjoining large empty grounds with several sports fields, the chimneys of the power station and high blocks of flats. The space expands without obstacles, ascends to the blue, then hides behind the concrete walls. But it exists - it even seems to be heard better than the noise of engines, the rumbling echo of an approaching tram or snatches of human words.

On such a day I'm standing at a tram stop. I am both a man and a woman. I'm going only to get to school but it appears to me that round the bend some great mystery will be unravelled. It's the time of day when the air, lighted by the sun is both cool and warm and now it touches my hand which is holding the shoulder strap of my bag. The air finally reaches my face, encircles it with its cool-warm stream. My eyes receive it. They open, they see. I'm waiting.

The prison of the four dimensions the worst of which is time. Seconds, minutes and hours forming into days, weeks, months and years. Mornings, noons, afternoons, nights. Autumns chasing summers, prolonged winters changing into brief springs. Tons of food, hectolitres of water, cubic miles of air. Incessant transformation of matter, continual psychic and mental processes. Compulsion to look, listen, talk, touch, move. The circle of people. Engulfing me.

It's my life and strangely I am out of it.
Here I sit.
Head in hands.
Petrified.
Betrayed.

Dear D,

You had a strange phone call one night in March, didn't you? From a University colleague you haven't seen for ages and probably don't really remember. Maybe you'll already have forgotten about it by the time you get this letter so let me refresh your memory. You heard then some odd sentences with not much sense to them. I was trying hard to communicate something to you but I didn't know how. It's not a nice thing to say but I enjoyed the uneasy surprise and consternation in your voice. Then, there was a commotion in your flat, you had people coming in and, on the top of that, your spouse was around. Well, I had to stop. I won't be marginalised. Not any more. I must have your full attention. To be totally frank I also called you six years ago but you were not at home and I heard a baby crying. I hoped this would finally deter me. How wrong I was.

Anyway, I couldn't possibly say it all on the phone. Writing is the best 'genre' for introverts. Now I will force you to read it. I'm going to send it as a certified letter with advice of delivery. You are indignant. Maybe not interested. I don't care. It's my 33rd birthday today and I'm going to be totally sincere at last. But, actually, I'm so scared I've finally broken the silence that I can't even bring myself to write in my native tongue. Moreover, English makes me feel somehow closer to you as if it was

something special we both share. I am sorry for typing this letter but hitting the keyboard seems to me at this moment more natural than some copperplate writing I would probably end up employing. Forgive me also for any mistakes and my chaotic style but, for God's sake, it's not a bloody exercise in paragraph writing but the vivisection of my soul. Oh no, don't think it's easy. It's been so many years. Years piling up silently like rings inside a tree trunk...

Now I've got enough. I have to confront my demons. Don't be afraid. I do assure you I'm not a dangerous raving lunatic writing to you from a hospital for the mentally deranged. I'm not in for anything desperate. I have too many precious things to lose. I'm just miserable and frustrated. Otherwise, if it may be so, I am quite successful. I've got an interesting job. I love books and music. I paint. I travel a lot. It's only you, your face that haunts me, returns to me... Ha, ha, ha - another sloppy soap-opera, isn't it? Ladies and Gentlemen sit comfortably in your armchairs and prepare a box of Kleenex! Now, I DON'T CARE! Call it what you want. My name for it is 'chronicles of the absurd' and I'm going to spew it all on you whether you like it or not. Relax baby, I'm well aware that it's too late. Irrevocably, absolutely too late. I didn't succeed then when there was hope.

What am I expecting now? You must understand. I'm not hoping against hope. There is no hope whatsoever, no more. Maybe there never was. You have your own life, a family. I have mine. You are unattainable, more distant than the dead. Yet, I can't get over you. I can't help the fact that you are imprinted on my consciousness. You are the leitmotif behind my reality. The focus through which I perceive the world. You just keep emerging on the surface however hard I try to erase the memory of you. Yet, to exist normally or rather semi-normally - here and today - I have to get you out of my life. Though, I suppose, in some deeper sense you will always be there.

All I know now is that I must have it done for because there's no other way out. I've got to tear you off with roots from this life into which you've become implanted. You keep blocking my way to happiness. It's not you who is by my side so why do I have to put up with your oppressive ghostly presence? And the notorious, abstract thought - how would it have been with you? Believe me, sometimes it gets unbearable. Because of you I'm not entirely sincere in my present relationship. I can't fully commit myself to my partner. And, God, how I wish I could. I feel I'm betraying my family, my marriage, my child by just writing to you. Also being a Catholic you can probably imagine the sense of guilt that is tormenting me. Yet it's the only

conceivable way of ending this absurd infatuation. To bring it into the light, to face it openly. To strip it of its treacherous beauty and attraction. I'm going to perform an operation. I will remove this obsession from my soul like a cancerous growth. I will undergo a chemotherapy and irradiation of real, not imagined, love.

I tended to think of my life in terms of things not done. Heaps of words not uttered, loads of sensations not tasted. Now the safety vent is torn open. And don't try to hush me! In your mind, don't tell me to calm down 'cause I don't intend to. This is all my passion and all my rage displayed for you to see. Now that I'm shedding bitter tears over my wasted past, glued in the cul-de-sac of the present, I want to disturb the self-complacent peacefulness of your universe. I want you to acknowledge my existence, to share this experience in your impossible way. You must let me have this last and only privilege.

I realise that I lost you for ever though I never had you, let alone never got to know you... when you were around at the University in the 1980s. I was so stupid. I never had the courage to make the first step.

Only waiting.
Waiting, waiting, waiting...
Only listening to the song in which Jim screams at the top of his voice
Only listening to the same song every evening
Hearing Jim rip the night open
Hearing Jim erupt with this universal howl
For someone to come and to hear

The Doors. Do you recognise?
But you never came and never heard.
This waiting had betrayed me.
And maybe it could have worked. If only, if, if,
if....

These thoughts have been tormenting me for ... how many?.... over 10 years already. How can I tell you on these few pages about 12 years of my life overshadowed by your existence, years of recurrent yearning, hope and self-reproach. How could I let myself be defeated without even

a fight! What I can recollect best from those frenzied days is my way to and from the University - the place which became sanctified by your presence. The cracked pavements of my lonely wanderings, soaked with silent emotions. Your image grew, fostered in the cradle of my walk.

My city dates back to the 15th century but it really flourished as a 19th century industrial establishment, with its centre full of old redbrick factories, factory owners' palaces and narrow streets crowded with cars and trams. As I walked, new streets kept opening like ugly crabs, some of them nurturing the raw pearls of beautiful but neglected art-nouveaux and eclectic houses. I remember them in all seasons: saturated in sunshine, washed by rain, in the background of granite clouds pierced by sunrays, with burning air-plane contrails in the pink clearness of the sunset sky, caressed by soil-smelling spring breeze, enwrapped in giant snow flakes. The impassive dramatis personae. Was it Monet who used to paint the same scenes in different kinds of light? I feel I could paint an anthology. They say spring is most beautiful but I cherish other times more subtle like

November marshmallow
the sky – blue pink and orange mousse
fissured in fine patterns of naked boughs

and the moon stuck inside
little celadon lemon half

And finally - the gloomy building of the University with its high stone walls standing in cold derision of this helpless odyssey. Inside, you walked the corridors like a pale ghost with those burning dark eyes of yours in a white face. God, you were so romantic. And those eyes were meeting mine, hypnotising me, don't deny it.

I wanted it to be easy. I wanted you to look at me just as I looked at you. I wanted my passion to be mirrored in your eyes. I expected you to smile at me as soon as I gathered the guts to smile at you. It was to be just like in the Doors' song – simple and quick.

The Doors again. I know you liked them. I overheard you talking with your friend about them. It's surprising how much you can learn if you tune your senses properly. These strange coincidences. How could I help getting deceived by them. Why the hell the Doors out of hundreds of other rock groups? Because I liked them too? Why did you have such thin protruding cheek bones just like me? What about the characteristic nervous tick so similar to mine that it formed in my mind some sort of absurd intimacy between us. And, on top of all this, why did you have to come to my city to study what interested me most - literature?

“I Looked At You”. Nice song but the primitive lines about exchanging smiles get on my nerves again.

Jesus, if it could have been as simple as that. But you didn’t smile. At first, when we didn’t have classes together we just met in the corridors by accident. Approaching you I was looking straight into your eyes. It was all that I could bring myself to do. Though you didn’t smile our eyes were united by an invisible bridge. I wanted to pull your soul out of these eyes. I encoded like a computer every detail of the material object that was your body. Though now your features are blurred in my mind and you seem to me more like an impressionist painting I’m sure that somewhere inside the neurones of my brain there’s a hyperrealist photograph of you, the photograph I never had.

Sometimes I try to concentrate, use all my mental powers and to recreate this image with every smallest detail but it’s no use. It’s as vague and unattainable as you yourself once were. It’s this paleness that I remember best. I suppose now that it was simply the result of the poor diet as is usually the case with students living on their own but then it made you even more fascinating. This pallor made you seem almost transparent and greatly enhanced the contrast between your skin and dark brown hair and eyes. You definitely had a touch of Jewishness to your looks and maybe that’s why I always get moody while watching the

news from Israel... Strangely enough, I never particularly fancied dark hair and eyes the Nordic type being my favourite. You were not exactly beautiful with a notch between your teeth and that quite long irregular nose but, again, the contrast between this sharpness and the softness of the eyes and mouth made you seem more fragile, more human.

Day after day my own green eyes kept scanning the corridors in the hope of spotting you in the noisy crowd as if I wanted to frame your silhouette against the pas-partout of the walls. You had an infuriating habit of being almost continuously in the company of a friend, which made the access to you even more difficult though, taking into account my pathological shyness, it could never have been easy. As I think about these days now I can clearly see it as a definition of myself. A person immobilised in a frozen movement, unable to act, gazing helplessly at the desired object always so close yet never to be grasped, like in a dream. Like in a dream. Hadn't I been aware that this was my reality, maybe more real than anything I was to experience later when I was no longer so open, so free? Now I know that but then I let myself be imprisoned in the sort of autistic introvertism which I had cultivated during my school years when I had been able to sit silently throughout a whole party, praying for it to be over. I

seemed to have detected this feature in you, too when I learned through a friend that you used to lie on your bed at the student hostel and stare at the ceiling for hours. Paradoxically enough, it was probably this mutual inclination of ours that was precisely the reason of my or our? failure.

Anyway, everything I was able to do was to stare and to collect the tiny scraps of information about you like some mental fetishist. I lived for the moments when I could see you. You were always sheltered from me as if you lived in a hermetic capsule. Once, in the library, when I spotted your figure in the queue I experienced something SOMETHING INDESCRIBABLE. You don't believe everything can be put neatly into words, do you? It was as if your presence suddenly changed my perception and the familiar objects, all the surrounding people became instantly full of meaning and delight simply because you were there. I was looking at my bag as the extreme happiness filled the air so that it was difficult to breathe. I was trembling all over and choking with happiness! I guess it was a 'close encounter of the third kind' with my own overwhelming desire to love.

And this is how I built the history of this weird infatuation. I literally talked myself into it. An emotional vampire inside me craved a victim and here it was - pale,

willowy and mysterious, protected by the light of day, available only in the night of dreams. And oh how I dreamt... During classes I imagined that you were somewhere near outside in the corridor waiting for me... At home I longed for another day at the University so I could see you again... Out in the open I strained my eyes to embody your shape even where it could never be ‘cause it composed so well with all landscapes, all scenes.

What was originally just a pleasant musing started to get out of control. Like an alien being, deceitfully, it grew roots into my psyche, which was ever so fertile, ever so ready. True, even in the most acute periods of this predicament (as I now tend to call it) I had days, weeks, when I didn’t give you a thought. But it always returned. Sometimes a piece of music triggered it, sometimes a sight of a face that reminded me of your features. I was, I am like an alcoholic, who, even if he doesn’t actually drink, can never say he’s cured. By the way, isn’t it a good idea to start the Association of Anonymous Emotional Alcoholics? Meetings every Friday, family therapy. Must think of it. Nothing’s a better remedy for the middle and old age tedium than social work.

In the meantime, I levitated in this state waiting for a wonder and, in the fourth year of my studies, it seemed that my prayers have been finally heard. Your group, which was

a year ahead of mine was miraculously joined with ours to attend together seminars on modern English literature. It's only now that I see all the implications of this unbelievable event. It was God offering me you on a plate and wishing me bon appetit and what? I didn't help myself. Just like that. As if I had indigestion.

Well, well, well, I feel like yelling and banging my head against the wall now but then this bringing us together by the outside force only reinforced my belief in the supernatural character of our relationship, or rather our future relationship. It was the very conviction that our final union was predestined that let me remain safely in my hitherto existing inertia. So I just waited...

Strangely enough, the circumstances seemed to confirm my assumption. Otherwise, how come you took a seat next to me? You hardly ever spoke and I, as it was to be expected, was not very active either. We were sitting side by side in front of our teacher, facing him silently in our unconsummated potentiality.

SITTING NEXT TO YOU. It was a whole new chapter. It was the closest we ever got. Sometimes I jokingly regretted it because it wasn't a particularly comfortable position for watching your face but the possibilities it offered... I was high on anticipation. Every day, every class could be

decisive. I could have left home oppressed but, as I was approaching the well-known building, I remembered that liberation wasn't far away. As I crossed the threshold and the door closed after the last student the class-room transformed. We were the crew of a space ship heading for an unknown galaxy.

I longed to be both beside and in front of you and in this fantastic world everything was possible. I looked from outside and saw us there imprisoned in this vehicle alienated from the rest of creation...

into this small room
you bring the scent of dreams
with their silvery unpredictability,
incessant discovering
and the bitterness of farewells
you blur the surprised reality
too different
too uncertain of your affiliation
among other faces
lulled by concentration
entwined by the patient un-quiet
you let go
of accidental smiles
you lose
tiny trembling glances

with your features clearly cut
in the soft oval
you're sitting there
like a sad icon

I took my time. I savoured the moments like good wine, slowly, deliberately. The cosmos of your body opened freely to my investigations.

For infinite minutes I could watch the pulse on one of your crossed legs, the hairs on your forearms, the veins on your hands. Though in reality I never touched you, mentally I travelled across every inch of your flesh.

How I ached to caress you! Like one thirsty for water, like one hungry for food... Every part of you appeared to me equally valuable. And I gave each fragment of your physical shape so much emotion and consideration that I had to think of them separately or I would explode. It was my habit just before falling asleep to concentrate on the given part and try to imagine all its details with such intensity that I became aware of the internal organs beneath the skin and muscles. Each cell, containing the DNA code that provided information how to create YOU, was equally precious and attractive for me. And I included each of them in this overwhelming feast, half fondling, half devouring you.

When, stuck back in reality, I found myself stiff by your side I was shocked and abashed at these cannibal pleasures. I imagined asking you with embarrassment :'Excuse me, darling, could I please caress your liver', or intestines, or appendix. Yet, it was true. I would drink the saliva out of YOUR mouth. I would suck the sweat from all over YOUR skin. If I could I would taste your gastric juice. I understood and welcomed your physiology, the strange workings of vital syrups in your organism. And I'm not a masochist. I just accepted your corporality without objections. You had 100% appeal to me. You were the ultimate attraction. You were just perfect.

Now the image is smashed but if I had a photograph of you I would paint a picture. I would pet you with my brush, lick you with my water-colours. I would recreate one by one the tissues that constitute your carnal system. But would I be able to capture your soul, as evasive and indefinable as, now, the features of your face. And it was not just your body that I was after. A mere desire would have passed long ago. The physical fascination just triggered a whole avalanche of emotions of a different kind. The predominating feeling was this obsessive conviction of the relationship being predestined. Sense of a missing element of the puzzle finally found, second half, kindred soul... you name it. Then wild delight, sweet

anguish, anticipation, elation. I was sure it was doomed to happen. I was so sure it was the Real Thing. It brought along magic, passion, commitment, unending, even growing, fascination. Because it was MEANT to be it would survive all disappointments, all faults, all storms that life is bound to bring. You say that everything, as time goes by, becomes dull, common and humdrum. No, somehow, I was certain that with you it could be different. Just getting to know you, learning all the details concerning your life, your family would, in itself, be a fascinating process. How much do I want to see you as a child, your childhood photographs, you as a teenager. I would be the keenest listener of your mother's favourite stories about your early goings-on. I would be interested in all the details including the account of your potty training and the colour of your kindergarten pinny. Then, sharing moments, events, though without suffocating each other. You, as a landscape around me, enfolding me, yet letting me grow in my own way. Two separate but overlapping beings exchanging the flow of life. How could it ever become boring? Even to watch you getting old... I could imagine those first delicate wrinkles around your eyes, first silver highlights in your hair... Sometimes I still catch myself looking around almost certain to find your face at family gatherings or just at home, hidden in one of the rooms. I look for it in the

bedroom, gracefully crowning the naked bust on the pillows. I still can't believe it won't be there to greet me when I return home or that I won't welcome it when I open the door. 'Never' is a difficult word. A collage of dreams. A patchwork of memories. This letter is.

'YOU CAN BORROW IT'

we were sitting in the corridor, your friend invariably hanging around, it was very crowded and noisy but you were beside me. I can't remember how it happened but you were. I was browsing through a book and you asked me something about it. I can't remember anything but your answer to my fragile, tentative 'you can borrow it'. It was 'no, thank you'.

'NO, THANK YOU'

are you aware of what you did? You opened your mouth to speak to me, you raised from us the curse of unspeakability and then you said 'no, thank you'? You fool, you stupid, bloody fool! Why, why did you have to say this? You could've had my book. It would've constituted the perfect pretext. A dreamlike pretence comparable in my frantic mind at least to the murder of

Archduke Ferdinand but the consequences would have been different, oh so totally converse.

It was clearly the turning point in our make-believe relationship and you just screwed everything up. What could I say to these words? They were final like an epitaph on a tombstone and my heart sank. I sat with my hands apart, the book like radioactive material in my lap.

I walked 'dazed and confused' until, in order not to go mad, I decided that you must not have realised the impact of your words. I emphasised the very fact that you had spoken to me in the first place. I couldn't make myself believe that you were really interested in this stupid book. You probably were as excited and nervous as me and, to cut a long story short, you just didn't know what you were saying. If this was the case, and I managed to persuade myself that it was, you were now in the same chasm of mingled reproof, vacillation and hope. What brotherhood in agony! You poor thing. How I longed to comfort you, to say that everything could still be retrieved, that I was so proud of you for trying, etc., etc. Words and sentences grew in my affected brain but nothing was done to relieve the rising incommunicable tide.

And then I saw you together.

With the (God forgive me) least attractive person at the faculty. As a perfect spy I knew that it was your friend who brought about your meeting. So you were that shy!

You were smiling and looking into each other's eyes. I passed you in the corridor and you didn't look at me as you always did. You were talking animatedly like I had never seen you do before. I left the building and went to the tram stop. I got into the carriage and stared at the window. But I might as well have been blind.

Some time later I saw you together in church. Why did it have to be my parish?

My thoughts are in the shape of sobs. Even now when I recollect it. After some time I learnt that you two had parted. Although I hopefully considered this a sure sign that you were, after all, for me it was a bitter triumph. It didn't change anything between us apart from my attitude to you. The joyful expectation was gradually getting more and more tainted by disbelief and dull inertia. Recently I've found in my old Descriptive Grammar copybook a whole page covered by tiny fretful handwriting with an unfinished sketch of a face in the upper left corner. I was never able to catch your likeness. I'm looking now at this piece of paper.

‘Casual, indifferent, unconcerned, lukewarm, cold, so cold, cool fish, unknowing, not understanding, not realising, letting me down, passing without a look, looking everywhere else, avoiding, not caring a bit, ignoring, deceiving, leading me astray, maybe amused, childish, silent, distant, never achieved, impossible to make friends with, long wished for, yearned for, pined for, craved for, languished after, irresistible, hypnotic, mesmerising, compelling, magnetic, fascinating, alluring, infectious, missed so badly, causing suffering, causing sad thoughts, killing hope, choking love, inert, disappearing, going away, escaping, hiding away, surrounded by strangers, being a stranger, watched carefully, watched with heart beating fast, watched with pain, watched with hope, watched with desire, prayed for, waiting for God knows what, decided and hesitant, sad, depressed, thoughtful, smiling with one side of closed lips, pretending not to see, not showing feelings, bringing anguish, bringing resignation, bringing bitterness, destroying sweet dreams, astonishing, full of contrasts, enlarging my burden, not understood, thin and pale, wearing blue jeans, transparent, with unknown properties, with unknown ability to love, unfathomable, with unknown consciousness, long awaited and not received and wanted so much, bringing fear, letting a black hole in, leaving me alone, making me helpless, robbing me

of dignity and power to live, making me share my feelings with other people, making me talk, making me not keep my secrets, making me feel stupid and ridiculed, humiliating me, questioning my attractiveness, tiring, exhausting, stealing my mind, icily unconscious, talking to a friend, evoking warmth, evoking tenderness, making me question my feelings, closing me in my world, omnipresent, occupying my thoughts, changing my perception, not available, with white hands, with piercing eyes, being the epicentrum, making all wellbeing fade away, poisoning my joy, making me feel I will not endure any more, making me vulnerable, allowing me to hear new things in music, distant, ultimate, too far, out of reach, out of bounds.'

I plunge into - through - these curled letters trying to resurrect the time they were written. But what I can see is only a thesaurus of awkward adjectives, more like a resentful litany than notes, a prayer for mercy standing armless in front of impending despair.

The last time I saw you in person was in front of the University Military Department where we used to fathom the absurd intricacies of wars and civil defence. A perfectly matched setting to end something so preposterous, don't you think? A good example of urban pathetic fallacy, isn't it. My friend asked you about your plans (it was after

graduation) for the future. You gave some sort of small talkish reply, turned round and went straight along this plain down-town street. I still have under my lids the image of your back disappearing among the discoloured buildings. Now I see that it was my last chance to stop you. Jesus, I must've realised it then! I could've excused myself and talked to you in private. I could've shouted and wept and made a fool of myself but I could've stopped you then. But instead I just let the air run through my fingers.

For heaven's sake, YOU COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN MINE! You were so...so unformed, as plastic as clay and I would have been only too glad to sculpture your emotions, to write on the tabula rasa of your heart. I could easily have been in this other one's place, in anyone's place beside you if only I was around at the right time, at the right place. And I was, how very much I was! I was your colleague, your fellow student sitting next to you. And no ugly duckling, too. I had my charm (so I heard at least). Why couldn't we simply have talked like anybody else in the group. Even when my friend spoke to you in my presence I pretended not to be there.

Why did we have to lose by a walk-over? We could at least have tried!!!

We could've, could've...like a hammer in my head.

‘Could+perfect infinitive. This form is used for past ability when the action was not performed’. Infinite imperfection.

We had chance of success. Then why did we doom ourselves to fail? That’s where the pain comes from. It would be OK if we tried and then split, let’s say, after a few months or so. Then, at least, I would’ve been able to tell myself ‘Oh, it was just a mistake. I’ve tried it and I’m not interested any more’. Unfulfilled potentiality. It’s this sense of unfulfilled potentiality that has been the cause of the recurrent torment of the last ten years. It’s the choking doubt whether the whole affair was just an illusion or the Real Thing never again to be recaptured. It remains only to say that there’s no chance of ever explaining this doubt without your help. However, the fact that we’re both married and have children is for me a practically insurmountable hindrance. All right, I’m writing this letter but what if I learnt that you really reciprocated my feelings? It would create an immense danger to my marriage which I cannot and don’t want to put at risk. Neither do I have a right to interfere with your private life. It would help if you told me that you had never fancied me. Tell me it could never have worked as far as you are concerned. Tell me you could never have fallen for me. Tell me you are happy. At least that would make some

sense. Oh I can imagine this perfect nauseating married bliss. Your spouse a pleasant, reasonably sensitive, down-to-earth creature in your tidy home peopled by a herd of children as becomes a good Catholic couple. Easy, easy, no need to take offence. You can always tell me to fuck off with my stupid, illusory, childish, absurd, irrational, totally groundless infatuation which persist solely as a sublimation of a deficit in my emotional life. Come on, do it! That's what I'm waiting for. That would help but do I really want to be rescued? What's the real purpose behind this letter? I'm clutching desperately at the last scrap of hope because it promises the only true happiness I can think of. I might tell myself that, objectively, I'm happy enough to be contented with life but still the question returns 'if it's fairly GOOD now wouldn't it be WONDERFUL with you?'. Is it greed or simply realism? Do you remember the parable from the New Testament about the lost sheep? 'Verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.' What if you are my lost sheep? Isn't the true purpose of human life to seek self-fulfilment using all one's potential in order to become happy and good, first to oneself, then to others? If I'm frustrated it means that I have failed to achieve the true purpose of my life. Maybe I shouldn't be saying Oh Lord, you gave me this burden to make me overcome my desires

but Oh Lord, you gave me this burden to make me be true to my real self against the world, even against the dogmas of my faith? Which is true, which is true? And at what price respectively? When I look at these frenzied pages I am surrounded by a mass of question marks. Questions, questions, questions. And there are more and more of them. This is probably the most interrogative sort of letter you've ever got. And probably you don't know the answers. Nobody does. They are bound to remain rhetorical. I can't get rid of this cup of bitter quest.

You know, I'm really scared of the day when I come out yelling and spouting every little word of my mystery. You know, life sometimes reminds me of a game with a super computer which provides the set-up and all the rules, occasionally lures you into thinking that you can make some choice but early in the game you are told that none has ever been reported to have won. I was too stupid to do the right thing twelve years ago but I was just made this way. It was not my fault that I was so very young, self-conscious, inexperienced and full of complexes. Now that I've shed most of them, now that I'm mature and well aware of my needs it's so definitely, irrevocably too late.

Listen, I'll tell you a secret. I never believed it but the grumbling of old aunties is true. Time flies. It really does. I hate ticking clocks. I can't bear the escaping of time. I'm

so tired. I'm tired of my face, its stale image in the mirror every day. Why do we have only one face for our whole life? I can now understand the appeal of the actor's trade. They can change faces like clothes. Yet, for all the vexation with this outer cloth of the mind I'm terrified of its slow disintegration. I can't bear the thought that some time in the future, inevitably, it will be only the skull. The bones, now sheltered underneath their leather coat, will be exposed, even if only to the worms. Shameless. Axiomatic.

If I could take a leave from life. Just a day off to pause for breath. You must be kidding, I can't possibly be supposed to live out every moment of it myself? I'm missing every second that's not shared with you. There are millions of seconds already lost. And millions to be lost. After all, time is all we've got stuck on this spinning planet. Oh, what a bore, would you just, as a popular graffitti has it, 'stop the earth. I want to get off!'

I thought youth was eternal. I wasn't saving time. Just as a child thinks it will never die, a young person cannot conceive of their ageing process. Obviously, on a rational plane they are fully conscious but in the depth of their hearts they can't relate the fact to themselves. It's similar, though on a much smaller scale, to death. Frankly, can anyone really comprehend their own death? Time flies. Youth goes by in a moment and you are left behind with a

sudden thought - is that really all? Why must silly youth be the floodlit stage where the most important drama of life is played? Do you also feel that or are you among those lucky ones who can with a clear conscience repeat after the singer: 'Je ne regrette rien'? How I envy such people! How easy it would be to bear the passing of time if you were certain that you achieved everything that was possible to achieve for a person like you in the given circumstances. It would be only natural to renounce a period of life if you lived it to the full. Squeezed it like a ripe orange and drank all the juice. I heard that there's a saying engraved on Joseph Conrad's grave, which I always found incongruous but now its meaning comes clear to me (forgive me if I distort it but, just like you, I was no crammer) : ' Rest after work, a port after stormy seas, death after life are really agreeable'. Life stressed, life emphasised, life in capital letters. Life, not vegetation. Oscar Wilde said something similar, I don't feel like looking it up but it was something about living itself being the supreme art. And in spite of everything he had to go through he was able to say 'I lived'. That's the utmost happiness, isn't it? Not to write/paint/compose a masterpiece which would always be only a fake, an ersatz of the flesh and blood entity. Isn't frustration the best manure for art? To be a virtuoso of hard fact - that would be something! What's the formula? Two

opposite ancient maxims come to my mind each from a different realm of consciousness: Carpe Diem and Memento Mori. Squash them and shake them and the dishy answer is ready: Golden Mean. But for all the chaos in my head I might just as well try to construct a perpetuum mobile. Gosh, I like these moments of being connected to the Internet of human thought. The time-proof safe deposit of feelings and ideas where there's no discrimination due to the actual period of life in the history of mankind, nationality, social status, education, health, age, looks, sex/sexual orientation or IQ. Here we are, all my soul brothers and sisters with me. If only the transmission were more distinct.

OK, I wasn't right when I wrote in the beginning that I was perfectly normal. I must be going mad. What's the most trendy idiom for talking nonsense? I suppose such oldies as 'tommy rot' and 'balderdash' are long out of fashion and I so very much want to impress you. Must buy a new dictionary. Perhaps it would do me good to refresh my point of view a bit. Christ's age is a lot to teenagers. What a pathetic old-fashioned fool I must seem to the liberated youth of today. I can see those sneering faces, patting me on the shoulder and asking me, not without a touch of good-hearted compassion, why a) we didn't just have a good fuck and b) either stayed together for some

more (if it was fun of course) or c) forget all about it and try another partner. *Unnecessary to be crossed out. Sorry if I offended any over-sensitive kid, I didn't mean to generalise but I strongly don't recommend over-sensitivity. Don't let us play the Holy Virgin. Hypocrisy is a bad vice. Of course it was what I wanted, wasn't it. Would we have confined ourselves to holding hands till retirement? Sure, nobody would believe I was going to make an altar with your picture at the centre and worship you platonically for the rest of my days. But wait, isn't it the very thing I do? Without a picture, though.

Yet, sex with you could never be vulgar. I couldn't just lust after you. It's sex deprived of love that is the definition of pornography. I've been fooled by my religion but with you sex would be the most natural thing to do, like breathing or eating. I mean, it's being natural wouldn't rob it of any of its delight. Volumes were written about the pleasures of the palate. And breathing? Does the fact that we don't take notice deprive it of its unquestionable wonder? Try not to breathe for three minutes. See what it is like to live without you?

Making love to you would be naturalness combined with the intensity of religious experience. Dynamism and petrifaction. The state of sur-life. Faces, hands, bodies in a congealed motion. Like the saints caught by a painter in a

spasm of ecstasy. It's God who invented love. Isn't the essence of any religion to assert the presence of an Intelligent Creator behind the surface of things? The two of us - humans - the crown of creation - originated with love in order that we should propagate it. To take you into my arms would be a confession of faith.

Feed the famished eyes with the shapes and factures of His image and likeness. Sip the awe out of the startled lips. Hear the thrilled trembling fingers telling the beads on the skin of the loved one.

Hail Mary, the Mother of God who became a human. Our Father, Thou art. Thou understandeth. A most tangible rosary at the core of being. It must have been established this way. Otherwise how would you explain a whole nirvana of bliss so different from plain animal satisfaction, which I can foresee in my dreams? A mere thought of it is too great a disturbance for my system. What if it happened for real? Would it be possible for a mortal to share the divine ecstasy? Would I survive it?

Do I sound a haunted devot, a pervert, or maybe a blasphemer? In the times of the Inquisition I would have been burnt alive. But what do you think my plight is? I AM burning alive. There's a holocaust in my heart.

Once I could at least look at you but since you deserted me for good I have this awful feeling that my life's over.

Can't you see? I'm just a living ghost. I feel like a stranger in my body, an intruder in my own life. A zombie woken half past youth by the tardy alarm-clock of panic. I hang in the vacuum. Everyday petty events flow by in an meaningless, aimless sequence.

Time devours itself. Time - you many faced monster. Time grew up with me. I knew it as a small domesticated pet. It fawned to a child waiting for Christmases, birthdays, holidays. I wanted it to pass, I didn't object. Time lets a child be its master but don't trust it, the tricky crook! It's going to let you down, to deceive you in a most deplorable way. Suddenly it gets out of control. Grows fierce, demanding. And finally, inevitably it will show you its most authentic visage - that of a ruthless serial murderer. The mysterium is over. Another victim joins the list.

But I'm still alive and, objectively, I have so much to rejoice in but I seem to live behind the screen, deep in the shell of obsession, immune to palpable reality, cut off from rapture and joy. What if it appears trivial in comparison to all kinds of global cataclysms. Is my suffering less real because it's absurd? I am a universe. A universe of void.

Once I thought there was so much ahead. And there's nothing. I never was a star. Now I'm not even young. I can see it in the way I wake up, react to the mornings. Before, they were different. I opened my eyes and felt a surge of

elation arising somewhere deep inside my body. I was strung with anticipation. Anything could happen. All roads were available. Every dream could come true. What was I waiting for? Take a still morning like today. It's quiet, only a dog is barking at the distance. Dim light oozes through the blind. Occasionally, a gust of wind rubs against the roof window. Raindrops tiptoe shyly on the pane. It's the home I know well. I'm OK. I'm not in pain. But I'm lying still like the morning listening to the canine conversation and I wonder why I am here. Why did things turn out like this? Why is this particular reality mine? There's someone in my bed but I'm alone.

I can only mourn my best years, my wild years that have gone away unused. And what will it be like in a year, two, five years time? What sort of blank depression will I get myself into? Have you reached a stage when death seems to be the most thrilling happening left to experience? When all you've got is a bunch of shattered dreams and a miserable heap of great expectations. I was trying hard to do something good with my life, I really was. I would say I was too sedulous, too guarded, never really let myself have my fling. Mortally scared of taking risks I was too 'sensible' to let myself be carried away by too strong emotions. A crazy elopement with a lover, accidental child - this could never happen to me. I wanted to prevent

unexpected incidents. Now I think I wanted to prevent life. Even when, as a teenager, I frequently went to punk concerts I never entered the centre of commotion, the mass of bodies vibrating in ecstatic dance just in front of the stage. I preferred leaning against some pillar at the back of the room or swaying monotonously with my eyes closed, inward-looking, like a person under the influence of drugs (not that I ever dared to taste them).

Superficially, my attitude to you fitted well in this scheme of caution. For some reason I considered it too risky to approach you. What was I afraid of? Was it really disappointment, rejection, derision as I tried to persuade myself? Or rather the forces I wouldn't be able to control? But, at the same time you could potentially be for me the source of power and growth if only these forces could be subjugated. I was always so concerned about my health, my safety. Why did I lose my instinct of psychic self-preservation when I met you? I chose to hurl myself into the suicidal pit of eternal dissatisfaction. Or did I, really? Was it my free will, my conscious decision or was I just programmed that way, unable to transcend, let alone define, my psychological heritage on the verge of maturity. Is such a concept as free will at all plausible or is it the greatest myth of Christianity? A choice between good and evil. Any choice. But even the worst deed could be explained and

absolved by modern psychology by stupidity, ignorance or personality disorders. And for anyone with a shade of perception and sensitivity it would be only too natural to develop personality disorders, let alone common depression, as soon as all the ugly secrets of life dawn on them. Dismiss the original sin and the religion of guilt. We are not naturally evil unless there's some kind of genetic stain. Did you insert sin into our dual helix, God? Well, we can't be responsible for that? There's always this overwhelming trust in the beginning. All children are born with the intrinsic need to imitate, to conform to society. Hitler was as innocent a baby as a Johann next door. Did he bite his mother's nipples more often than other infants? Or was he born with claws? It can't be exclusively a person's fault that they didn't succeed in the process of acquiring the accepted system of values. Something somewhere must have gone wrong. Nobody in their right mind wants to do evil on purpose. If they do they are more likely ill than evil. So who is Hell for? Isn't a psychiatrist's consulting room a more proper place for the damned?

Enough of that. 'Highway to Hell' and 'Stairway to Heaven'. I listen to rock too much. I like it best in the car when the scenery scampers away before the spurring wheels. I like travelling. I move my physical body to all parts of the world and each time I set out for a journey an

idiotic hope forms in my mind that the road I'm following brings me closer to you. For this surreal quest I always select the countries, the places I've never been to before, dismissing those I've already visited even if they enchanted me. I could trot along the length and width of the world and stand speechless before its wonders but I wouldn't be able to avoid the lurking anticlimax. There's nowhere to escape carrying you around inside me, like a tattoo in my heart. Was it you with me in the Vaporetto in Venice? In the cable car to Aiguilles du Midi? In the plane to Toronto?

I could invent all kinds of hobbies and pastimes to occupy my time but even if I tried to be (in spite of my laziness and ignorance) like the Renaissance men I would never be able to tear this yearning from my soul. Even when I talk to the one I am with it's the other face, the banned one that springs to my mind. While we're making love...

What I am best at is fantasising. I imagine how, after a long (and needless to say martyred life), I will summon you to my death-bed (the dying have special rights, don't they?)...or now, better not waste so many more years. I'd rather fall seriously ill and summon you to my sick-bed (the seriously sick also have special rights)... And then what?

My favourite fantasy is quite simple, though.

I sit at my office looking at the door. The door which opens so many times during the day to let in people of various ages, sexes and attractiveness. So I'm not surprised when it opens again. Suddenly thousands of throbbing dazzling images like on a video clip fill my eyes to their rims. The air thickens. As you approach me the floor contracts and my eyes burst. When I recover my eyesight you stand in front of me. I can feel on me the touch of the two dark mysteries in your face. But you didn't come, a Phoenix from the ashes to finally annihilate me. For the first time your eyes look AT and not THROUGH me. Softly you tell me to take my coat and, in a trance, we go out together, into the open. Nobody knows what's between us. Around there's my city and you are around. The streets no longer taunt me with my loneliness. The buildings stopped deriding me. The city seems to come alive from beneath our feet. In this schizophrenic virtual reality you are everywhere I ever imagined you to be. In this obscure mine of relics I only have to look through

a stained glass window

I want to melt you
on a dirty winter day
from the buildings

of the city
from the lumbered smelly nooks
from the disintegrating art-nouveaux
houses
you will come to me
from the vapours of exhaust fumes
half-conscious
with your hair stiff in the wind

I want to watch your face
contoured by the dust
against the background of dingy walls
wrapped in the snatches of someone
else's sentences
amongst someone else's breaths

without touching
we will go straight on
with our hands in our pockets,
inhaling sharp fermented air

we won't open our mouths
we will only pass
crossroads and passages
stop only

before the coral beads of street-lights
we will watch the city swell
its congested joints groan
its weary patches of plaster faint

out of
the hasty patter of passers-by
the hoarse snarls of cars
the stifled whine of concrete
I'll build the symphony

from
the shop windows
the stinging posters
the pavement and the asphalt
I'll carve out
your white profile

Gosh, it's all very well but I could surely do with a cold shower. I really am obsessed by this city. I think you can also understand its imagery. After all you lived here for a couple of years. I only hope that its pollution didn't affect my brain cells. It's no fun sitting incarcerated like an impotent mutant in one of the cells of this concrete pueblo.

The eye to freedom is the window. Looking out gives me an illusion of power. I fancy observing tiny figures and vehicles swarming somewhere down there. At night - vulnerable splashes of light suspended in the air. Bound to be switched off.

Then, there's the sky. It can never be boring. All the shapes and colours and chiaroscuro. And it's inhabited, too. The Sun, the Moon, Constellations and Aircraft. And now I have also a rare migratory bird - the Comet. I watch her unafraid. I don't agree to associate this solitary nomadic friend with ill fortune. Once a comet introduced the birth of the Saviour. Could one imagine a happier event? So every night I look for her on the northern hemisphere and I feel reassured when I find her there, each night in a slightly different place, a little too big for this sky, a bit grotesque like a born dancer who understood her destiny too late. Soon she'll leave to adore other worlds. See you in 4000 years!

I let my thoughts loose but I am not free even with the vast expanses of air that belongs to nobody. Again, my thoughts return to you. You cheeky swine, why do you always have to shove bluntly into my association of ideas? When I look at the clouds performing their uncanny pantomime around the full moon I can't help thinking about your home town. It's no dirty moloch like mine. It's

a small town but ancient, classy, mysterious. It is the site where Copernicus was born. I can see him - a lonely scholar hungrily scanning the firmament for the proofs of the revolution. Why couldn't you choose some characterless Podunk instead? Well, I shouldn't wonder. It's just like you. You are just aggressively poetic.

My favourite celestial phenomenon is the sunset. The best place for watching it was my room on the ninth floor in the block of flats where I lived with my parents. It was a high tower-like wind-swept dwelling overlooking the park and allotment grounds. There I watched hundreds of sunsets at different seasons - gorgeous and abundant in summer, pastel in winter, exquisite and delicate in autumn and spring. But they all had one thing in common - the weird quality of light. Deep sticky honey yellow spiced with a touch of mauve, gradually evolving into a whole palette of warmth - from purple to vermilion. It lends colour to the clouds. Fantastic configurations of puffy elements ablaze against the background of deepening brilliance. Layers of space incandescent from behind, from beyond, which it is impossible even to imagine – like that what is beyond the universe.

You witness the process of creation, everchanging, everfresh, each time unique - like frescoes just being spread over the surface of the sky by an abundant artist. Exquisite,

with resplendent cloud edges. Majestic, freely moving all over the dome. It's so silent yet the glory can be heard, it's displayed just like the electronic sound graph in a CD player.

The light keeps ripening until it flushes in such an orgy of hues that all the surrounding matter seems to have been just a monochrome before. The resurrection of colours is pronounced! They materialise, gain body and start living their own life. Yes, it's a life-giving light. I'm sure it was at sunset that the first cell started its metabolism millions of years ago (evolutionist version) or God created Adam (creationist version).

Yes, this light has something monumental to it. It's aura incorporates the mystery. As if the spiritual acquired palpable physical properties. And its physicality, as all kinds' of light - both corpuscular and undulatory character - still puzzles the science. The sunset glow lets me feel the taste of vast spaces - shiny oceans boundlessly widespread over the horizon. Or, I don't know why, it sometimes brought to my mind the image of the primitive cubism of great American cities. The giant skyscrapers and wide avenues basking in the afternoon sun. The multiwindowed walls responding to the light like photosensitive plates. And all this accompanied by the music of Boston or Kansas - the symphonic rock echoing among the Sphinxes of

concrete, glass and aluminium. But in a moment the vision gets magnified, the city shrinks against the blazing sky exposing infinite shoals of clouds overflowing, brazen and eternal, insolently transcendent. It is so obvious, so obvious.

Yes, I've always been fascinated by light - the ultimate sculptor. By its power to transform objects, to deepen and change the colours and, somehow, even to change reality. Recently, while looking through my balcony, I've suddenly been reminded of the light I had seen in Britain. After a day of bad weather the light started to ooze disturbingly from behind the clouds. The buildings surrounded a small green square with a shimmering autumn tree. The light focused on the living area ignoring the nearby walls. The emerald grass and the leaves glimmering in a weird dance. From time to time people passed like ghosts with long moving shadows. The familiar landscape changed, brought to mind other landscapes, other countries. I thought of the Stirling castle in Scotland and the wildly green grass I saw there. The narrow asphalt road, suddenly seemed so very English. At another time a patch of yellowish grass roasted by the afternoon sun and a wide, low tree, which I saw from my window, reminded me, God knows why, of the African savannah. I watched for lions there. And at the seaside, some time, I used to sit at a small cafeteria nestled

on a high sandy shore. Its plastered walls sweltering white-hot against the unspeakably blue sky and sea seemed to me more Spanish than the Spain I finally saw.

How strange to think that every single square kilometre in this world in the same moment has its very own unique configuration of landscape forming elements, of clouds, of light. I would like to be everywhere at the same time, to see all. I'm insatiable. Something cries out inside me, something compatible to all the weirdness I just cannot grasp.

It's all a bit frightening, disquieting like an undefined humming at the rim of consciousness. It shows that things are not what they are taken for. As if a gate opened for other realities. The surface of the world is only a peel ready to be rinded. As I sit watching, motionless, inevitably gilded, the face once flat once spherical, humble and ready to be moulded - the air becomes mixed with light, perfectly shaken, thick with foreboding. Suddenly I am out of place in my room. I don't really fit there. I am really of some other dimension. I belong to Something Beyond, Something In Control.

The moment reechoes, caressed like a retrieved child. I can feel it again and again, various sights, photographs can trigger it back. The impossible achieved. The particular

ambience has been engraved, captured like a gin in his bottle.

I'm impelled to remember everything. Years long past. Moments - ordinary, with no particular meaning and yet unforgettable. Places where we were together - my family. My mother and I - the peaceful oneness. My father's protection hovering in the background. A child sheltered against the world by its parents' arms, secure in the microcosm of their loving care. Moments before the chasm. Whiles before the fall. When I catch myself at the moment of starting to be happy I instantly realise that any happiness I can experience here is bound to be imperfect. It makes me think of a bride

crisp phantom
ethereal in white
for one day
like a May-fly

Yet the memory of them keeps you on the surface. They let you believe there's some sort of justification, the purpose behind it all. That it was not an accident. That it was meant to be. Now that I stand helpless before my fate like a kid before its angry parents I'm fretting but still I want to believe, I want to believe that in the end everything will be OK. I am being pathetic allright, aren't I. But if

anyone in this world thinks they aren't God help them because they don't know how they err...

It's strange how people and situations are entwined with objects. Objects, things, buildings have something mystical to them. When I think of my previous flat, the one I lived in with my parents, I feel a clear sting of pain. I remember every corner of it, every square metre like an integrated circuit planted in my brain, always ready to replay. It's wrapped in my memories. I wonder how anybody can live there normally now. It's a haunted place. All its inhabitants come real, especially my father - his presence is most tangible there. I can't imagine this flat doesn't exist. It's unthinkable but it really doesn't, as it was before, it will never be. When I visited it once in its new shape it felt like schizophrenia, as if you looked at the mirror and saw an unknown face.

My high-floating flat with its views from the eastern and western windows. The view from the kitchen reminded me of a city with a harbour, although there's not even a river here. The maze of the buildings at the distance looked like cranes, the sounds of the trams like approaching ships. The birds on the window sill squealing like the seagulls. The movement: slow, irregular, pushing its grandeur against the panes.

The view from my room - a snapshot of platinium white spring trees dazzling on the stormy horizon. Unforgettable. These are

tatoos

As I come out
my eyes clarify
from the blue
The space
curves all around
Horizon
absorbs the giant star
soundlessly into other skies
Above
on the polished dome
a grotesque cluster of cosmic rubble
stuck so insolently flash
and the bunches of steam vapour
deliciously violet
The air so clear is
like the first
- created
Along this way
I carry

the tattos in memory
- forget-me-nots
like the figure of Mum
in the open window

When I went back there I walked like a ghost inspecting the circumstances of its former life. I felt cut off from these places as if they belonged to somebody else. I sat on a bench outside the giant block of flats - the transatlantic - overshadowing, obscuring. Was it the place where I had spent almost 20 years of my life? But it felt strange that I could even breathe in the air here. It was unbelievable that this enclave of memories still existed almost in the centre of my city. The buildings seemed to throb with long forgotten fear and anticipation. All of a sudden I was drowned in this entourage. How could I ever enclose all those particles of time, palpitating, heavy with real-ness which is now called the past? But they were coming forth wild and alive like the sun in the eyes on a windy day.

These plates of concrete issued me. An incredible cluster of living cells in something so dead. Like the spirit in the body. I was growing up to become conscious there. This is from where I observed the world. All that was so obvious and so irresistibly preposterous. Why here, why me, why at all?

Again I thought of my parents - those part-answers. Father - pedantic, punctilious, full of reserve. Mother - irrational, romantic, exalted. What a bloody mixture I am! A rational choleric, a passionate realist. Or just a thin figure on the 9th floor with eyes overfilled with sun.

Coming back to earth I ponder on the setting sun's exceptional ability to influence the weather. It's a fact that an overcast sky often brightens at sunset. I once had an encounter, an especially fervent one, with this transforming power. It was

after the rain

there's a fight up there
intense ultramarine scratched
by the sparkling claws
how good it is to plunge into freshness
to breathe in the shiny roughness

and I'm drifting
across the parquet of the pavement
I'm dancing
my face is sore from the wind
my eyes hurt

outlines of roofs are glued up by clouds
but I already know who has won
somewhere behind
the silent irradiance
reigns supreme
the triumph is its essence
monumental grey ultramarine
understands
- it’s only a royal robe
impatiently cast away

so I can once look at your face
why do you want to set me on fire?
you play me too perfectly
I won’t do for you
don’t you feel how I curve
under your touch
I’m brimming over
feverishly I eject
rapturous throbs
around me
boiling air
whirls

but let me go yet

while yet spare me
while yet let me once see
the music
wrench out
from my hair and fingers

I adore the atmospheric opera. The actors are few, and always the same but the effects, though sometimes similar, never identical, unforgettable. You can never be bored by the shape of rain, its smell and shiver and colours. It tears out memories of other unique days, other unique rains...

Then I thought maybe I should try sunrises? Maybe they have greater impact? No way for a sleepyhead like me. And besides, the rising sun is just ignorant in its blinding blaze. It lacks the wisdom of the completed circle across the heavens. Yes, there's definitely something to the sunset glow. It makes things so clear, so plastic. For example, it turns the irises of my eyes into two transparent celadon jellies. If I look closer I can see all shades of turquoise and emerald vibrating around the nuclei - two black dots like the distant ends of the tunnels, the guideposts into myself. Is that strange head in a flaming aureola myself? The light is also exceptionally good for squeezing out pimples (not to mention blackheads which are absolutely irresistible). Disgusted? Haven't you ever done it? One had to cope

somehow in the pre-Clearasil era. And, mind you, it wasn't MY idea to shove soul into meat. Well, if the Almighty thought it best then let Him have His way.

Meat, meat... My mind suddenly harks to a poem by Beckett, written during the time his beloved was dying of tuberculosis. A vision of bleeding meat contrasted with non-existent arctic flowers perfectly illustrates the tragic crash of dreams and status quo. Oh, how familiar to me is the poem's jerky turbulent rhythm of irregular lines, its metric anarchy and condensation of images of ambiguous beauty. Oh how much do I understand this nostalgia for the utopian Eden, which remains persistently against reason and flesh and blood reality. Beckett is a clear example of a true artist who is not, as a literary critic said, exquisite but mercilessly, passionately observant like a seer or a prophet.

Now, an amaranth drop is soaking slowly into the horizon. Then there's silence. All nature is dead until the night accepts it into her kingdom. And although the setting sun's glory is doomed to fade - its afterglow resounding in space like the relict radiation of the Big Bang or whatever it was - it has that unique right for the thickening of colour, for the uncontrollable explosion of all the energy accumulated throughout the day. More, throughout about 7 milliards years of the star's existence. Now that a sunray touches the cuticle of my hand I cannot believe. That it was

born inside the bulging giant. That it witnessed the ballet of fiery pyramids. That it covered 150 million km through callous space in order to enter the velvet halo around this little planet. And to find there the pulsing delicateness of a creature that doesn't last a second in the cosmic time. How humble is the universe! How infinitely democratic! And how come that we, the freshmen in the cosmic academy, can be so preoccupied by such petty matters like the workings of our hormones. Isn't it what all that amorous turmoil is about? Now, for instance, these insidious substances seem to have drowned my instrument of thinking.

I can stop myself somehow during the day but how can I control my dreams - those movies in my head created by an invisible director? Sometimes I have dreams about you. Surprisingly, they are rather rare but if they do happen they are so vivid, so suggestive that I'm shaken and all my resolutions with me. There are all sorts of dreams in weird configurations. One night I went to see you in a hospital - a filthy wooden place in some forgotten foreign village. Although your hair was blond and you had a round freckled face I recognised you at once. You know you can't escape from me! I can still see you bolstered up on that bed, resourceless and helpless... you were so glad to see me. I came as your saviour, your hands were begging me to stay,

your blue eyes hosted immeasurable tenderness. But I had to go. How I wish I had stayed. For ever. Another time you came together to visit me. I didn't want to meet your spouse but I tried to be polite. It was quite an ordinary social occasion except for the fact that, for unknown reasons, you lay in your underwear on my bed and we talked, the presence of your detestable partner hovering somewhere out of view like a giant unaccountable insect. However, I could easily ask you all the questions I ever dreamt at asking. You answered kindly and with full particulars. You clearly wanted to show an enviable level of self-possession but I did manage to notice that weak trace of regret in your gaze. I repeat, you won't hide anything from me! When you left, the stupid contented pair, I had a feeling of disgust.

But last night the magic returned. I met you against the unnaturally azure sky, obviously in the company of other people, but not emotionally connected. I was looking into your eyes and I heard you utter my name, distinctly and languidly at the same time. Then you went somewhere behind me and, just before you disappeared, your hand rubbed against mine. I could give up a lifetime of orgasms for that touch! I woke up devastated.

After such nights I'm only the desperate need to grab the receiver and phone you and... Listen darling, it's not true

that I want you out of my life! I'm not able to kill the hope. It must be the main stock, the DOS without which humans can't function. I can't help myself! I can't take any more! I want you back, this time for real. Come back to me! Don't let me down like you once did. I'll escape, I'll leave everything behind. I stumble through the particles of my reality like a programmed robot all the time aware that I don't really belong to it. I'm often overpowered by its material facade but I have the feeling that everything will pass like a bad dream and in the end there will have to be US. I am a chrysalis. I need you to become a butterfly. The dullness, the despair are only a thin curtain, a trial I have go through. I have suffered for so long. I deserve you.

Now my vision is blurred, with you I will see face to face.

And I'm not thinking of any compromise. I'm monogamous by nature. I must have everything. I'm not interested in partial arrangements and half-solutions. With you by my side I wouldn't care. What happens. What people say. With you I could live on the Moon. Anyway, you have the power to transform things. You would enchant a desert to grow flowers. I didn't want to break like this but I am compelled. If I could talk to you properly just for once I'm sure that all the inhibited emotions would

dissolve in us like an instant drink. If I could touch you just for once to make sure that you really exist.
Please

Yes, old T.S. was right. The world will not end with a bang. It will end with a frightfully banal whimper
.....all I've ever dreamt of.....broke my heart.....need you.....want you.....oh baby..... ....

What is it about me that I don't get what I want?
Whatever the trace of thought it always boils down to one thing. A woe as ancient as mankind, worn out from repeating

how I wish
I could
call you
my love

hold
you
in
my arms

as simple as that.

Did I manage to keep your attention to this point? If so, welcome to my humble outpost in hell. The hell I didn't need God to thrust me to.

Or is this letter now just a crumpled piece of paper in the basket? Paper - the most patient shrink. Well, I'll continue, anyway. Indulging in the last illusion - the audience of this asinine drama. I know what I am to you. And maybe to myself, too. A poor wretch wailing out a pathetic soliloquy to the computer screen. To act or not to act? I'm straining my eyes to see my reflection on the monitor. Is there any resemblance to Hamlet? Well, these haunted looks remind me rather of an experimental rat frantically searching for a way out of the labyrinth. But all the exits seem to have been blocked.

Sorry for a moment of weakness. No, I'm not requiring of you the commitment of the previous page. What I want is only elemental empathy. You see, I can't kill the hope so I must kill you if you can't be mine. It may seem perverse but it's you who can best help me. Kindly don't call the police. You have surely heard about metaphors, haven't you? Be a good Christian and perform a merciful act. After all, it's you who knows best your own weak points. You, or... Yes, I thought of M. Strange, but once we were on quite friendly terms. Your rejected ex-partner would be an ideal informer if only I could get in touch. However, I

didn’t suspect it would be such a problem. It was only when I was looking for M’s address that I realised how much time had passed. For me it was like yesterday but the world had forgotten. All traces were lost. If I told you how I stood, a ludicrous Sherlock Holmes, before the block of flats where M (and then I) used to give private lessons straining my mind to remember the name of the family you would split your sides with laughter. Finally I learnt that they had emigrated to the USA, address unknown. So I turned to the University - an old, devastated building, now deprived of any charm and character. I met there only a Kafkian blank wall of formal distrust and I had to invent the ‘Tenth Anniversary Graduates Reunion’ so that they could let me dig in the archives. I was quite frenzied then - it was after one of those dreams and I couldn’t get peace. I’m not surprised they were suspicious. It must have shown in my eyes.

I saw your photograph. There, on the diploma. In a cardboard folder. On a solid wooden desk. It was a basement room. Barred windows. Quiet. I heard only a reassuring cooing of a bird in the grass. So I didn’t make you up. You were there. Black and white, with this crooked smile as if you had a facial nerve paralysis. Your eyes pitch black on the photo, smug, mocking, insolent. Who said journeys in time were impossible? Defiantly I stared back. I

summoned all my ten years of maturity and I was the stronger one this time. I didn't let the cheeky squit control me.

M's address was there, too. Honestly or dishonestly I accomplished my purpose. I wanted to thank the man who was in charge. Tell him the truth. Explain. I wasn't going to do anything wrong. I just wanted to save myself.

Later, it turned out that M is in London (for 5 years already). Somehow I lost my energy. It seemed that Fate had resolved to bank up difficulties in my path. I had my experiment with a 'direct action' and, as the acute symptoms eased a bit, I returned to writing. I agree that's not much of an action but it's like one sets easier aims for an idiot child.

But, again - I don't care! I am what I am. I may be just a bellyache for you but I don't give a damn! For the first time I'm speaking in my own voice. I am the boss here. It's the only place where I can lay out my own rules. Bugger the grammar, style, imagery, chronology, composition, even sense. That's how I work through this epistle. I'm pouncing at it blindfold like an animal maddened by hunger and pain. Seeking now only one thing - relief. It's just like me - tough and soft simultaneously. It's a vortex. Undulating, contrasting. Like emotions. Uneven, rugged. Like a wound. Only, the more I write the more there seems to write about.

As if something kept uncovering layer by layer. It's not a story I could write and forget it. It's my bloody reality. It really happened to me. It's happening. Steaming blood and all. Hot line news.

There's no censorship here. I let the reins loose. I let myself drift on the ocean of ideas. All thoughts and feelings are acceptable. There's no need to feel guilty or scared or oppressed. No need to keep suffocating with this stubborn ball in my throat. It's like going out into fresh air after a long time spent in a smoky room. It's not until you go outside that you realise your clothes stink. And you feel dizzy and surprised that breathing can be a pleasure. This letter feels like the first gulps of freedom. And I will go on until I'm too exhausted to press the keys. Regardless of what you or anyone else may think about it. I'm sorry if it's complete crap to read. It may seem full of exaltation and pseudo-sophisticated jabbering but, at least, I can guarantee its pure authenticity. Here is a real Peeping Tom experience for you! A genuine testimony of a flesh and blood person clearing accounts with youth. I have no choice. Now I've got my 'five minutes', my Hyde Park corner. I have to write it and you have to read it.

Airs and graces aside, I shouldn't apologise. It's all really a homage to you, isn't it? But don't flatter yourself. Doubts beset me wondering if you deserve it. And don't be

too critical. You would be more guarded if you knew that I made one more attempt at connection with the past. I've read your master thesis. It was easy. I wondered why I hadn't done it years ago. They are all catalogued and ready for inspection in the University library.

I must say I wasn't much impressed. I obviously got a kick out of touching the yellowish coated paper pages with your finger prints on them but I was rather disappointed with the contents. It was written correctly but wouldn't one expect that after 5 years of studies? It clearly lacked something. There was no underlying power that says so much of an author even if their work is far from perfect. It reminded me more of a school composition than a piece of innovative academic research. Borrowing it I intended to make a Xerox copy but, having read it, I gave up the idea. Why waste money?

I'm doing well, aren't I? I mean, in the long and exhausting job of planting an aversion to you. That's my strategy - to convince myself that I was totally wrong in choosing the object of my sighs. Although the above was what I truly thought of your thesis the infatuation didn't disappear as if by magic. After all, you were not made exclusively of brains. The impact of my latest breakdown made it all too clear that I'm far from being cured. I was shocked to learn my real motives behind this letter. I can no

longer pretend to be a Saint George fighting with a dragon of lust. What I really wanted was to lure you back. To show you what you've lost (God help me with this one). Although having you would fulfil all of my dreams I was, at the same time, mortally frightened that it might by some chance come true. I wouldn't let myself infringe the holy set of rules, the foundations on which I built my life. There's always the subconscious - a ready litter basket for unwanted desires. I know this mechanism well . I've got also a whole bibliography on the mental development, all kinds of 'Everything Is Possible' manuals. Maybe if I was patient and determined enough I would get what I want in the end. I could start the 'winning you' campaign on all levels of spiritual and physical reality. Life shows that such things actually happen. But I have no right to it now and I have to delete even the dream of it and, having been spared the real wonder, pray for the bitter miracle of reconcilement. The world will always offer something I will desire - like now - you. The transaction is tempting but let's name it - this is my soul I would have to sell. Moreover, how can I be really sure that I had lost 'the real wonder'? What do I know of 'the real' - I who live in a time that doesn't exist - the past and the future.

So I'm now certain that this letter will remain the only relationship I could ever have with you. That's why I'm so

scared of finishing it. What if you don't answer? This would really be the end because I won't do anything else. And what if I learn that you never gave me a warm thought? What an absolute damnfool I would turn out to be. To occupy my thoughts for so many years with a person who can't even remember me properly! OK, OK but there's another idea always ready to leap up. You may not remember me now but then, years ago, you might have been quite a willing partner. My only chance of salvation would be if you swore that it would have never worked out, anyway. What nonsense. How can you be sure of that? So on, so on...

These speculations remind me of medieval discussions about the number of devils that could be accommodated on a pin's top. It's a hopeless case. The operation may be successful but a patient will die, anyway. It's starting to dawn on me that you can't help me even if you wished to try. I'm fagged out with this rigmarole. I'm sentenced to carry this primeval disappointment throughout my life unless...

I FORGIVE MYSELF

FORGIVE MYSELF even if it would mean forgiveness for spoiling my own life.

and then I would be exculpated.

Now it all seems to me like discerning shapes and meaning from a superficially abstract picture. The dawn of self-awareness. For the first time in all those years I'm starting to understand that I have to come to terms not with you but with MYSELF. I put myself on trial. I declared myself guilty. Now I must defend myself. Now this is my resolution, my constitution of freedom. Enough of this self-mutiny! Enough of the prison bars view! I'll arrange a pass for myself, or maybe even a conditional release. You hurt me, you damage my psyche and I am not a masochist. I must eliminate the thing that destroys me. I must demystify you, denounce you like an enemy spy trying to hinder all the processes vital to my happiness. You're just a parasite in my life.

This is my era of ego. Don't misunderstand me. It's not that I'm going to pamper myself now. It's not that I want to put myself in the place of God like all the New Age rubbish. This is a modern world. It can contrive almost every imaginable problem. I could simply take Prozac and feel good but I can't believe that the source of my problem is just a disorder in the physiology of neurotransmitters. But I'm not going to change one subjection to another. I'm

not interested in the prostheses of happiness and artificial bliss when the real McCoy is within my reach. What I'm going to do is to let out all the human potentialities which I naturally possess and which I kept stifled and dwarfed before the seemingly invincible army of complexes, frustrations, fears and the sense of guilt. It's true I have a long way before me but in the same sense as a tiny fountain-head of a river has a long way to the ocean. But it finally reaches its destination. It always does.

It all depends on me, not on you. I cannot blame you, transfer the responsibility. I carefully constructed this trap, now I must become the architect of liberation. I must break the spell and stop letting the obscure forces control me. I'll go step by step. I have to learn to live again. Like an infant, or better - like a patient with amnesia. Before, I clung to you for stimulation. You were the projection of my desire for bliss. It was exclusively mine. You had really nothing to do with it. I myself wrote the screenplay and directed the trashy melodrama where I let you star, the phantom you who probably had no significant resemblance to the real person that studied with me at the university.

I know I'm deep in the bog. I realise that the process of disengaging from you will be reminiscent of wrenching a baby from its mother's arms. Nevertheless, it's the only way to freedom I can think of. Don't laugh at my attempts

at amateur psychoanalysis. The healing process is most efficient and lasting when it's done by the organism itself and most organisms are capable and adequately equipped to perform it. I am now able to look at myself from a different perspective, detect what is wrong and try to mend it. I don't really have to fight. Rather it's acceptance that's the problem and the most difficult challenge. The rebellion, the despair - that's easy. They used to be my prevailing reactions to life. But to accept is quite a different pair of shoes. I mean accept what you can't change, otherwise acceptance would be only a jackass' domain. Before, I had no intention of accepting the imperfect nature of the world, and, inevitably, myself. I didn't grant myself the right to make mistakes. I played a romantic idealist whose every desire had to be fulfilled in strictest detail or I would be mortally offended. At the same time I was afraid to be happy, to execute my dreams. I thought it pride, violation, intrusion into the sphere of Divinity.

So what happens if you can't let yourself be happy and simultaneously badly want to be happy? You just retreat into the limbo of pensiveness and wishful thinking. And waiting, waiting, never ending futile waiting. Have you noticed that some people spend their whole lives waiting? And if you asked them straight out about it who, in their right minds, would risk answering that the purpose of life is

waiting? That, alongside with deterioration and death, is one of the ugliest and, in contrast to the other two, well disguised secrets of existence which we tend to discover too late or, in some cases, never discover.

So I decide now to quit the waiting room of life and enter the banqueting-hall of wonder. Once before I have already managed to - if not exactly enter the ballroom - then at least to keep myself on the surface of life after my first serious tete a tete with death.

My history is the history of a fear obsessed person.

Fear - the magic flute of the devil.
Fear - the most rapacious of emotions.
It almost killed happiness.
It almost killed love.

I used to be under its complete control. I was just a marionette who thought the world ended outside its wooden box. I don't remember exactly how it started. Maybe some hormonal changes in puberty were to blame, maybe the lack of vitamins and microelements, maybe the somewhat uneasy ambience of my small family. Nevertheless, sometime in the middle of secondary school it dawned on me that I am really only a cleverly put together lump of meat which is irrevocably bound to decay and the question of the immortal soul behind it suddenly started to seem a very shady one. When once I caught a glimpse of what could be the grim reality under the merciful tranquillizers of religion and society I never managed to shake it off. Naturally, my innate difficulty in entering upon interhuman relations was an additional burden. Imagine a lonely introverted teenager with hardly any friends at hand brooding over the tragic fate of humanity. Oh what a moving picture. Strange that it didn't

end in suicide. Or rather not. It takes courage to kill oneself. It had, however, some quite prosaic consequences like my mother cringing in shame at the parent-teacher meetings. But that's a trifle in comparison to the storms that raged in my heart.

All the fears I was possessed by appeared to find expression in a severe form of hypochondria that completely poisoned my young life. When you take a closer look it seems only too natural that I should be most afraid of losing my mortal shell if I didn't really believe that it represented anything more than mere flesh and blood. When my peers enjoyed life as well as they could I lived as if a present day was my last. Especially when I woke up at night I had this feeling of time's merciless flow. Maybe because all nights seem the same. Then, in the middle of the night I remembered a long chain of previous nights and a horrible conviction materialised. That it is as certain as a present moment that their number is counted. That a night will surely come which will be the one of or before my death. It's like being forced to stand on a mine which is 100% sure to blow. And I could do nothing but stir helplessly in my death cell of a consciousness. Every morning I woke up surprised to find myself still alive. I felt estranged in my body whose functioning I minutely watched with underlying anxiousness and distrust. Any

possible malfunctioning of my organism however trivial it might turn out to be I regarded with deepest possible dismay. Going to the doctor, undergoing medical tests were for me the experiences bordering on the edge of psychic resistance - they might always break the most abhorred, most devastating news - that I was mortally ill. The worst thing was that I couldn't get the thought of a whole army of possible ailments out of my mind. If I left my body as it was it would be OK. There was nothing very wrong with it. But no, I had to invent illnesses. It was a kind of a pre-cognitive process. I became a master in negative thinking. The most difficult thing to accept was for me the fact that I might, after all, be healthy. So I tortured myself by imagining all the contents of medical encyclopaedia attacking my poor system (all sorts of cancers being my favourite ones). How many times was I late for my classes at the University because I had to examine in a most scrupulous way something on my body which might be a growing lump, a suspicious mole or a dangerously swollen organ. I had clear visions of malicious cells lurking somewhere inside me, peremptory, living instead of me, leaving me only a cramped throat, a nausea of a breath. I had a favourite illness whose symptoms and connotations I took hours to ponder upon in a state of petrified awe. Yet, any other ailment which I happened to get to know about

was as sure to keep my demented thoughts occupied. As if one could die a thousand times.

One night when I was ‘home alone’ I had an episode of something clearly bordering on psychosis. I could feel it growing - gradually, cunningly - as if it wanted to ambush me in the transparent walls of my flat. It pushed through the whole cubature virtually increasing the gravitation. In a moment I would... nowhere to turn... around sheeny blackness with a patchwork of lights... a well.

Managed to phone a friend living nearby. Jumped into the night, velvet with consolation. Looking about me, like a thief I forced my way to the block of flats one cross-street away. Slammed the door leaving it outside. The walls seemed reasonably normal here. To talk, to hear my voice... It was better. Only some months later I felt cheated when I learnt that the friend was taken to the hospital with suspected schizophrenia.

I continued living in a sort of desperate trance, looking at life from the perspective of a dying person. You’ve surely heard of the psychological research on the stages that people go through when they learn of their forthcoming inevitable death. As far as I was concerned (and I was very much concerned cause my own, needless to add, quick death seemed to me the only real thing in the world) I could never manage to pass from the stage of agonising panic and

despair to the acceptance of my fate. And my question to the universe was not ‘why me?’ but ‘why not me?’

This state of things continued for years with varied intensity and, finally, (when I was already at the university), as if in a perfect nightmare, my worst misgivings came true and I had to go to hospital in order to undergo what was called minor surgery. Of course you can imagine that it was far from minor in my mind... What’s worse the operation was to take place at the oncological ward. Virtually, the hell gates opened. It appeared I was finally really going to say goodbye to the cruel world...

A giant hall jumps to my mind. It was somewhere downstairs at the hospital, full of wires and pipes where I don’t know why they had installed the telephones. There I talked to my mother in a fragile cracking voice, arid mouth and eyelids high-strung against the gushing flow. A creature beaten, defeated in this dungeon - a real hell’s pride swallowing without a belch its defenceless victim.

As you see I survived the operation without any serious consequences to my physical health but its impact on my psyche can be compared to that of Enola Gay on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. With just my luck I developed some sort of paradoxical adverse reaction to the drug given before the actual anaesthesia and instead of relaxation and sleepiness I felt, for the first time in my life, something that was not

‘just’ fear. It lasted only some moments just before losing consciousness but time didn’t matter then (Einstein knew what he was doing). I was lying in the corridor with my heart throbbing (as the nurse said it would) looking at the door of the operating room. There was some inscription on it. I knew all the letters but it’s meaning rang no bell in my brain. I heard the voices from the next room but I couldn’t make out what they were saying. Some extreme primeval emotion was holding me in its grip. I could no longer define what I was scared of. I wasn’t just scared of anything definable. I myself was utter animal panic. Annihilating. Total. Without a flicker of hope. Before, it was only pretend-fear. Now it was absolute.

I remember vaguely the suffocating uncertainty of waking up in the post-operation room. The worried moon of my mother’s face and her voice urging me to get up, to walk... cause that’s what the doctor said I should do. There was even a priest with a wafer stuck into my numb mouth. It all wasn’t as tragic as it seemed (although the final results of the tumour examination were due in two weeks) but all hope appeared to have leaked out of my indifferent body. Before the operation I might have been a frightened stupid hypochondriac but I was myself after all, after it I became a catatonic mannequin somehow detached from my earlier life as if it had been taken off alongside the lump.

The only flicker of light was provided by the presence of a friend whom I met at the hospital and who shared my fate.

Then what? Home. It wasn't like home at all. I felt that there wasn't a shelter for me in the whole world. I was pursued. Wanted dead or alive (if this psychosis could be called life). I went to sleep into black chasms. I woke up to blank lustre of days. The atoms of my body no longer seemed to be held together by electromagnetic power. I became so insubstantial that I was not sure about my physical boundaries. I was just coming apart.

I had to face it I wanted to hide away but it was hopeless, just as well I could make an exit from myself. It was a feeling comparable to the one when you have a fever. You could cover yourself with blanket after blanket but still it's no use. You're still cold. So I had to face it. I was compelled. I had to face Nothingness.

Have you ever thought of the loss of consciousness? But really, deeply, have you considered this? Not existing for ever. Annihilation. All eternity with no me any more. Maybe it doesn't hurt then. But it's horror when you're alive. That makes us no more than animals on their way to the slaughter house. Don't tell me there is any sense in such a life. If you have tasted Nothingness nothing could make sense any more. Fuck the memory of others! Fuck good name! Don't make me laugh! What difference does it make

for someone who just doesn't exist. Force your lazy neurones to imagine this. Click. Switch off. No thoughts. No emotions. Anti-consciousness like anti-matter. Just nothing. Even 'nothing' is a word. It is something, after all. And we're talking of

for the rest of the bloody time and after. It's comparable to imagining the endlessness of the universe. It tires you to even think of it because no consciousness can handle this. It

is
unimaginable
like
the sun
in the
black
sky

Hope died. Religion was the song of a madman. I was looking at people - those close around me and the ones far away - on the TV screen. People behaving as if nothing happened. But how could they manage? Didn't they know they are just walking corpses? And decaying, too. Have you got a grandfather? Or just take a close look at your mama's face. How can people be so calm, even joyful, how

can they live with a death sentence that could be executed at any moment. We all live in a death cell. In one hundred years we will all be dead. Even foetuses are sentenced prisoners in their mothers' wombs. It's not me who is deranged, it's you, ignorant bastards! I pity the people who can never feel the essential strangeness of existence. They can live the whole life taking everything for granted. Paul Valery once said that every way of looking at things which doesn't make them seem strange is not true. I know what you mean, brother! What I experience is not a mania, psychosis or dementia. It's an ordinary human life. Only, I am aware. You fools, death is not a matter of belief, one of the slightly unreal 'final things' in the catechism. It is a fact, an absolute certainty, peremptory like the dash after the date of birth in an epitaph.

Yes, it's hard to think that beneath our cosy everyday existence there lurks an incalculable ruler - Chaos. Thin and vulnerable is the border and our order is ruined by accident, illness, misfortune. Border order. Our world splashes in a second. We can't recognise ourselves. There's only falling, falling without end.

Normally we're immune but once you realise that, you're lost. Sometimes I feel I have within me the history of all orphaned children, of all parents that lost their kids, of all

deserted lovers. In one word - the Sylvia Plath's concentration camp of a world.

I now recollect the death of my father.

The worst was the sight of his hands. Thin, transparent branches with haematomas, the traces of punctures. The agony concentrated there. And he used to be a quite well-built man! For the first few months I couldn't get to sleep because of these hands.

When it was over my mother stayed to hold him by this hand.

Every day she brought the news from hell.

Every day another unanswered prayer.

Before the majesty of death
you stand with a leg of a chicken
with a bowl of Portagen
you compose the unfeeling fingers into mudra
pour your strength
into the unhearing ears
but this body unswervingly

keeps slipping from your hands

He was unconscious but his body worked wearily through the processes of vegetation. It wheezed, occasionally it opened its dry black mouth where I poured a half-spoon of water. Once or twice it lifted its arm. Finally, at 6 p.m., after they had changed its diaper, the wheezing stopped abruptly.

SCREAM
NNNNNNNNNNOOOOOOOOOOOOOO !!!!!!!!!!!!!
!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Munch's "The Scream". No of a cry at the end of the hospital corridor, his soul upheaving, watching you.
Then in the taxi silent with your mama. The driver happened to play Freddie Mercury's „The Show Must Go On".

Although it's already been several years I still have this recurrent dream, vivid as the light of day, that, even after his funeral, he returns - still sick but alive, never liable to death.

When my father died, my reality - the consciousness to which I've been stuck for 30 years - turned out to be false. I was cheated like a child who discovers what sex is about. I

kept looking in the mirror and I couldn't recognise myself. Life passes, events come and go but there's always this non-existence accompanying me. Funnily enough, it was only after his death that I became aware of his genes still present in my body. They always lay an ambush for me. The memories. I can't get rid even of such a sheer preposterousness like the situation when, already during his illness, he brought me a bag of nuts and I ate them and I discovered that some of them were mouldy (you know I was n u t s about my health) and I got so furious at him.

All the times when I was unkind to him.

And the past, when he was my big Daddy. So strong, so resourceful, so competent in his elegant suit behind his desk in his office. It didn't help him. Now the suit, mouldy, dishevelled on his skeleton. Sometimes I can't believe he had existed at all. 59 years of age. What was the aim of his life? He worked hard, but he didn't seem to have any deeper interests, any hobbies. Most of his time he spent watching TV, sometimes reading newspapers. I don't think he read any longer book after he had finished school. What use did he make of his life? What did I really know about him? Neither me nor my mother had the courage to talk with him about death. We never crossed the border of the

taboo. Our souls never really touched. And he passed away, passed through the world and our lives. A decent citizen, a diligent employee, a late lamented husband and father. A nobody.

Daddy Daddy
I didn't know
you were so fragile

like your hat
when you were
at the hospital

like your hat
lonely on the hanger

So after the death of my father and of a friend with leukaemia I gave up prayer.

The absurd rose until it became hyper absurd, so monstrously absolute that it started to be unbelievable.

I started to suspect that the theory of a world as an accident of matter was a form of faith as well. The naivety of this faith became struck me. I remembered some anti-materialist arguments: „Would a monkey hitting the keys of a writing machine produce a Shakespearian sonnet? Would a hurricane passing over a scrap-heap build a plane?" And isn't life, even the most primitive form still more complicated than a sonnet or than a plane? And where did a monkey or a hurricane come from? Why then does anything exist?

The very existence of any existence, and especially the conscious part of it turned out to be too disturbing even for my callous mind to just take for granted.

My stony world of blank days from some pages ago showed a trace of a crack.

Somehow I couldn't believe that the intricate myself was only a cosmic joke, and, what's most infuriating, performed by no definite consciousness but just a blind chance, an idiotic set of coincidences. It's so sophisticated to dispense with the transcendental. It's so fashionable to be an agnostic nowadays. Agnosticism is a view stating that the cognition of the objective reality is impossible. Maybe that's why so many of these learned people would ignore the supernatural even if they stumbled over it. But this doesn't prevent them from explaining, from creating artificial meaning. Who are you taking me for you posh posers, you so called scientists, you frustrated philosophers. How can any meaning survive in a world of matter. Don't tell me anything can mean something out of itself in this insane bloody finishable den.

And I R E F U S E TO MEAN NOTHING!!!

To be just a cluster of cells, ingeniously put together (by whom I ask you?) but so liable to damage, to destruction. I refuse to be only physical. Understand? Or don't you care a damn just like the rest of the fucking matter? How can your stupid theories explain all this pathetic human characteristic – constant search and anxiety - this desperate compulsion to express oneself, to step beyond the physical? Are you

going to stuff me again with this rubbish about natural development of psychic and social processes, adaptability and the survival of the fittest? All I would tell you, at the gateway of the twenty first century is, that we are the least adapted of all species. Don't let our technology fool you. After the ages of human ingenuity we still haven't answered the basic questions. We have built the cities of skyscrapers - our Babel tower to heaven. We have split the atom. We have landed on the Moon. Yet we are no closer to the sense of being than the cavemen. We still remain the tribe which is hungry for meaning. Yes, however soppy it sounds (we are so afraid and ashamed of pathos – to some extent we are right – it's been exploited too much), we are the tribe starving for the absolute.

Theory of evolution rose in a world where "God died" as a quasi religion (as you see people can't do without some kind of opiate) substituting the real relationship with the divine by a self-made over-confident system of all-explaining ideas with pretence to be called scientific (apologies to a true form of science which is humble in front of the mysteries it encounters). Just look at the trashy sentimentalism of their crucial belief – the transformation of animals in order to produce humans, the pathetic ethos of big bad dinosaurs dying out to be replaced by brave little mammals. What a heart-rending heroic history showing our

progress as the victorious species which succeeded thanks to a series of happy coincidences and the rapid development of the brain case. When I started to analyze it all more closely I couldn't rid myself of a suspicion that the whole affair with "the accident" being responsible for everything is just a fraud. And, what's most important, this neat set of ideas didn't move us even a step closer to the cognition of our fate.

Recently I've watched a programme on TV about near death experiences. Oh how great is the scientists' determination to abolish all that could point out to the existence of a transcendental reality. How quickly would they reduce a human being to a decaying mass of chemicals and their experiences in clinical death to the hallucinations of the dying brain. They were so relieved to find out that pilots undergo similar phenomena under extreme loads. But are they really the same? Why do the people who died and came to life again stress the fact that what they experienced was the most real thing in their whole life? Why can they see and hear everything that goes on around them if their senses are already switched off? Why do some of them report things they just couldn't know while they were in their bodies, for example a nail hidden under a board on the ceiling? Why are their accounts so similar? We are all different people, with various backgrounds, experiences,

beliefs. Why should our dying be the same? One of the learned professors in the programme compared dying to the blackout outside the room. In such a situation the one in the room can't see anything outside but only the room itself reflected in the window. That was the professor's explanation of the phenomena in the dying brain. It just reflects itself! Is the tunnel encoded in our brain? The shiny figure? The words of love? And if yes – why? By whom?

Coming back to evolution, ideas can't be generated from chemical elements on their own, no matter how much time passes. The recent discoveries in genetics make us fall on our knees in front of the complexity of the most primitive cells. It is practically impossible that such ingenious structures, whose functioning depends on the perfect correlation of many intricate mechanisms, could be formed accidentally and, what's strangest, gradually from simple components. And what about the principle of irreducible complexity? The fossils found up to now just don't fulfill Darwin's hope of finding the so called "transitional forms". There are so many gaps in the beautifully sketched tree of evolution that the scientists had to create a new bizarre theory of punctuated equilibria. Moreover, there even seems to be no experimental proof that there ever was anything like "primeval soup". On the contrary it seems that the conditions on young Earth were quite different

from those assumed by the evolutionists (for example according to the testimony of the oldest rocks there was a great amount of oxygen in the atmosphere, which could easily destroy the "evolving elements"). And why are they so sure that under the influence of the laws of nature and time, matter could become organised in more and more complex forms. To tell the truth it's rather the other way round - matter as we know it today has clearly a tendency to degenerate and disintegrate into complete chaos (and 95% of mutations are fatal to the organisms concerned) – just look at the world and at yourself – from the moment of conception you have all your genes, not a single one can evolve in the course of your life. Your growing up is just an expansion of what already exists followed by slow deterioration and, finally, annihilation.

And even if we tried to find some justification for the theory of evolution we would have to ask why the primeval elements should w a n t to become thinking beings? And why do they exist at all? Where did they come from? There will always be a question which is bound to remain unanswered: why is it so that anything exists at all and what was the reason for things starting to exist whether it's a big bang or not. It takes simple logic to understand that. Even while considering closely the contemporary form of the theory of evolution one is perplexed by the number of

strange coincidences right from the beginning of the universe, by the apparent inclination of the laws of nature to produce life (this phenomenon was even called by some scientists the anthropogenic principle), by the "creativity" and "intelligence" of nature which employs such notions as the nuclear, electromagnetic and gravitational information or the language of DNA. Even if there were different laws of nature and physical conditions in the past, which would explain different behaviour of matter in the past then what made them that way? Whatever the beginning was in reality, science not only can't abolish the idea of transcendence but seems to dangerously circulate around it. The "scientificality" of the theory of evolution is falling apart. It is still a standing theory in education but the science itself starts to gather information which casts quite a different light on the creationists' cause. It may be, just as it was with so many theories in the past, that the theory of evolution will soon remain only as a relic of an awkward, quackish and ridiculous attempt to rule out the supernatural from the universe. Thus the discoveries of modern astrophysics and biology have done more for my faith than years of school cathehesis.

But it all really started with the palm of my hand.

For the first time in my life I looked at it with wonder. What a curious instrument it was! Under the comfortably formed skin there hid muscles and bones, all that so pliable and brisk, incessantly supplied with energy by the network of veins, obediently carrying out my brain's orders. In one piercing flicker of recognition I became aware of the i n t e - l l i g e n c e and l o v e encoded in the construction of my body. What's more the intelligence and love obviously did not issue from myself. I was e n d o w e d with them. They were somehow separate from my consciousness. I saw my body as a mechanism that I, even with all the help that science can provide, wasn't really able to fathom, even physically, a mechanism that was g i v e n to me. I could feel that I am a creature, some kind of a living testimony. For the first time in so many months I let myself relax. From that moment I could never again believe in this horrendous nihility. It just went out of the puzzle. I don't know why but I knew that it couldn't possibly have anything to do with a c r e a t u r e !

I can't explain it but, whether it was evolution or not, I felt a touch of some infinite tenderness penetrating every one of my own atoms, every corner of my own aching self.

As if some invisible being wanted to convince me of its existence.

One part of me melted, almost ready to surrender, but the other one resisted – still frozen, stigmatized by pain. I seemed to have finally, after so many years of dead Catholicism, experienced a real touch of God and ...

I WAS SO FURIOUS AT THE GUY!!!

Now I had someone responsible.

you existed all right but why had it been necessary to create such a world and if it is not exactly the world you created we have always satan to blame but you could have destroyed him immediately why did you allow it to turn out that way and by the way it's quite clear that lucifer had already rebelled by the time of the creation of the earth so why did you take the risk did you think that mankind would be more satisfactory you are omniscient you knew it all before the actual creation you knew every moment of this you knew my fear you are omnipotent couldn't you have created a world without the possibility of evil and happy and free at the same time was it too difficult for god can you create a box and not know what it contains let me summarize all the doubtological classics namely why are

you so silent why don't you intervene why don't you show yourself freely to all the people who ask you it would surely destroy their doubts in one moment and where were you when i was depressed and wanted to kill myself and where were you when so many did actually kill themselves do you suppose i can believe in that garden of eden of yours what do i have in common with it i personally didn't have a chance to choose to be tested why am i to blame i didn't eat that damned apple i was born defiled I never had the chance to be perfect i wasn't aware it seems that our primary fault is that we are born at all we are born into sin into the world with all its hellish rules and conditions answer yourself which is the first the sin or we i would say more is it possible to live here and not to sin yes to the same extent as it is possible to live in a pig sty and not to stink so we are born into it it's just our characteristic just like the colour of hair or eyes how can we be responsible for it you say we have to humble ourselves admit that we are sinners and be grateful to you for saving us but this situation is not our doing at all we are sort of programmed that way most of us don't want to do wrong it's just stronger and it overpowers us but it can almost always be explained there's almost always a reason why somebody does something wrong (you know all that stuff family background difficult childhood unreciprocated love illness

misfortune fear ignorance despair and all the bloody repertoire of this miserable sphere) if anyone is responsible it is adam and eve your first people whom you created but you can defend even them after all they were only creatures and how could you call your world good if there was a tree of good and e v i l in it so its you who started it not us how can you blame us why do you employ collective responsibility why doesn't every one of us get a chance to have their own paradise and if you created good and wise people in your likeness why then were they so prone to deception and why did you put this bloody tree there why didn't you really give them another chance they were so inexperienced was it really necessary to chase them away from paradise you are merciful and gracious you said that love covers many sins and you knew well what this banishment meant for all mankind why didn't you just forgive them i'm fagged out with your concept of freedom one has too much to pay for it you see i am thrown into this world without being asked i have to suffer its evil and i am told now that it's all my fault was i asked if i wanted to be born and if i'm now alive is it such a sin that i want to be happy i just want to be happy understand i don't want to suffer i don't wanna be ill shit i don't wanna die i want to be safe satisfied i'm so tired life is a short flight a bungee jump when you realize too late that there's no cord life is

being thrust into a gloomy maze with many lights like fen-fires deceiving you and only one is true but if you are not lucky enough to find it you are condemned to stay forever in a still more gloomy maze with no lights at all how can you do it to us we are so tired fagged out pained agonized disintegrated scared we need love and care and compassion not judgement what sort of gift is l i f e we cannot give it back we must accept it otherwise we will be punished i'd rather be asked before I was born whether i want to go through it but would then anyone want to be born at all jesus it must mean a lot to you who are said to be love since you let us be tormented here i don't know about everyone but most of the people i know and myself are completely paralysed by various kinds of suffering and can't think of anything but of getting relief i'd sooner understand the paradise than hell i can't bear the thought that any human being could be imprisoned there for eternity who if not you should know what eternity is how can you let any limited creature suffer for eternity we can't even imagine it is this your righteousness your justice i don't understand why you had to DIE for me what's wrong with me was this world really the only way you are omnipotent you could have done something to prevent it couldn't you why didn't you come right away and sort it out you could have stopped the world and created another

better who am I to tell you what to do yes yes i know i'm nobody and nothing belongs to me i just have to accept your ways and basta if not there's hell always available anyway our 'free will' sometimes seems to be only an illusion if you control everything it's really you who decide whom you give the grace of faith how can we know what is really our free will and what is your power working in us how to distinguish between the mass of impulses why have you created us at all what did you need us for once you wanted to destroy us remember the flood you regretted creating people how could they become so corrupt is it again this freedom of yours you wanted real love and you can't programme anyone to love but if it was out of love why has it turned into something so monstrous like that i can't understand is that some sort of an experiment you say you know how it is to be human are you sure of that after all you knew for sure that god existed we can only believe and that's a hell of a difference isn't it and after all you didn't suffer all that long and how could you have redeemed the sins of all the people that ever lived in such a short time that seems to be a compact salvation doesn't it has it something to do with quality not quantity but it was so awfully patronizing you had to do it all by yourself and what about innumerable lifetimes of all shades of pain disappointment humiliation despair why is this world

totally not fair people are not evenly equipped from the very start the injustice begins in the chromosomes continues throughout our lives from cradle to grave and some accidents just can't be explained by our sinful nature theologians try hard to think up hundreds of reasons you might have when you let die a mother of young children or when an earthquake annihilates half of a nation all the absurd tragedies that leave only agony and emptiness is there really a meaning to that why did you trap me in this perfect-imperfect body just look at us even in our youth we are far from perfect why that which is organic has to be so irregular so full of byproducts from head to toes we are full of bacteria and parasites and all sorts of sickening slimy stinking discharges outside and inside and all this in good health what about when anything is wrong and when we get old the real tragedy begins we turn into sheer monsters so wrinkled swelled flagging disfigured awkward decrepit how can anything so sharp and clean and clear as consciousness be closed in such a slough our bodies worn out like old warriors it must have cost you a lot to take on our form but do you think it doesn't cost us and you haven't ever got old have you however i'm sort of used to it and i love the body of my child when I think that something might happen to it i get frantic and i can even understand that an old body could be loved i think of my

grandma love blots it all out do you really love me most of all more than my mum if so why don't you help me she would she would never let me suffer if she could help me and you can do everything you want i can't understand why you who call yourself our father can ever stand the mutiny that our flesh has to undergo do you want to stress that the spirit is what is really important but you created all material things including humans so matter must be important to you anyway i don't suppose it's contemporary form has much in common with what you say you created what about ugliness and defecation (did adam and eve defecate and how) and loathsome odours and all that and the filthy bugs was there any entrophy there and the immunological system it couldn't have been useful in paradise anyway forgive me but it all seem like a fairy-tale to me and if it's true why were the first people deceived so easily they were much more perfect than we are and they seem so idiotically naive you know what a world this is a human heart breaks in front of the suffering of one lifetime eternal shriek of a child renounced by its mother to be burnt in auschwitz how can this infinite heart endure all this multiplied by billions throughout ages 'cause i suppose you feel it don't you too how to see it all and not to go mad you expect impossible things of us if suffering is so abundant and so welcome in your world why did you cure people should we oppose

suffering at all maybe we should accept it and bear it in patience and what about your cooperation with the father of lies it seems that he can't do anything without your permission how can you in your holiness have anything to do with him why did you give this world to him when one sees all the monstrosities he causes both in the material and in the spiritual realm it's hard to believe that you control it not to say provoke it to achieve your aims and why did he rebel against you in the first place for goodness' sake he was in paradise with you he had everything and you are so wonderful and perfect that 'just to know you is to love you' so what went wrong why was he jealous why was he frustrated he just wanted to be god himself and nobody can be god so maybe we are all condemned to eternal frustration and why did satan want to kill jesus wasn't he wise enough to know that by doing this he is exactly fulfilling the scriptures creating christian martyrology what about the book of job and all these tests of yours they remind me of the ever multiplying obstacles in a computer game but we are no virtual heroes we're so weak though you maintain it's for our good it's so difficult to believe it when one is just immobilised by pain what good can possibly come out of that i am scared you can't possibly be against me can you if only i could believe in all you're saying but some things i just can't understand they seem

not important or stupid or wrong to me why there's so much blood in your dealings with mankind why did you kill people it all seems so full of contradictions you tell us to ask you for things and then you tell that we must obey and respect y o u r will so why ask at all and forgive me but your will seems to me a bit unpredictable how should we pray if we really never know for sure what you want us to do for example we pray for healing and it doesn't happen you can always say that after all it wasn't your will for a given person so how could one pray with faith that is certainty of what we expect and if that's all a delusion opiate for the masses just a projection of my twisted psyche what am i anyway what is really myself how to translate the transitoriness and evasiveness of the stream of thoughts and feelings produced by the reflecting mind how to turn the everchanging personality into the definition of self (sometimes various selves of the past seem so alien to me) how to reconcile the desperate awe of leaving an earthly human shape with the yearning for the timeless and dimensionless absolute how can one possibly search for something infinite with finite means although our cognition may approach asymptotically the essence of the mystery of being it will never reach it it's so difficult because being in the bodies in the material world we are completely immersed in our reality the possible other reality glimmers

illusively somewhere in the distance like the top of an iceberg revelations are so scarce you are so discreet and what if the infinite does not exist at all what if after all we a r e cosmic fools in the lonely universe as some try hard to convince mankind and you know how hard it is to match the scientific theories with the bible if the world is as it is now and it's so far from perfect had the universe you created completely different physical properties can the biblical truths ever be proved by science why there's a horrible doubt-provoking gulf between them is it possible that all that happens between the unconscious floating of a foetus and the cognition of an old man is only a senseless configuration of matter and it's all predestined foreseen i may wither and go mad and cogitate for the rest of my life but it won't affect the truth which is already defined either there's something after death or not either god exists or not and no matter how wise and old and experienced i became i won't change anything and if there's no god nothing else can turn me on i just can't let go dismiss this question because nothing nothing in the whole universe can be important if it isn't would paradise be created for me because i want to believe in it it's so hard to talk to communicate with others and to talk to someone invisible answer me if i just could ring you up and ask what it is all about it is so difficult to identify your voice in this

unpredictable tangled world where every event can be interpreted differently according to the watcher's viewpoint and system of values how would i like to believe there's a scheme that there's sense to it that everything will be explained and if you exist and you want to do something for me what could i ask you for - for a journey in time would you give me a second chance they say there are two tragedies – not to have one's dreams fulfilled and to have them fulfilled so maybe mine is the lesser one why do i feel manoeuvred into bad situations and then judged why can't i cope with myself i'm so tired i feel so empty so useless i need urgent help i need consolation by the way why is it me who has to be a creature why am i not you why am i not god nobody would doubt that it's better to be the eternal perfect mighty omnipotent safe being and not such an ephemereal weak caricature and one of billions (have you really made us in your likeness and if you have why are we so weak, even in the garden of eden) i look around and i see people living in famous 'quiet desperation' (see dead poets' society) like my mother-in-law; plump steamy-kitchen madonna choking with life as with a too large potato and all the others to whom you can't get through i've had enough of my semisafe sleepy cage with no answers but only blunt questions and i would like to be your only one your beloved why do i have to share you

with millions i’m so helpless if i could at least get to know you well get really in touch with you you know it’s impossible for our minds even to imagine you let alone the universe you are supposed to have created where did y o u come from why are you as you are and no other and why you are you and why i’m not you for that matter?

how could I ever think that God hasn’t thought these thoughts before

I’m accustomed to pain.
It’s a tight coat with broken zippers.
I close my eyes and open my eyes and it’s always there.
I can’t even wash myself properly and I’m beginning to smell.

I bear life with difficulty.
I don’t feel at home in the world.
You might say there’s an easy way out but I’m too scared of death.
So I’m stuck. I can’t shake off the reality. It’s a vicious circle.

desire to transcend the limits of consciousness

ontological anxiety acute awareness of finality

flight from self-perception

Is life a poisoned gift? Could I have come this far only to end in death?

Our eyes are the answer to light. Our ears are the answer to sounds.
And our mind to what?

Who are you really ? What do you bring?

You know, I've really started reading this message from you. I sort of finally acknowledged the receipt of this long unopened certified letter from You. Suddenly I understood how important it was. The most important book in the world. I saw how full and fleshy it was. How it was so different from the plaintive prayer-book of my youth. I wanted to touch it and to touch it hard. I was overwhelmed by hunger. I deflowered it. It's rawness made me sad that I had not pounced at it before. I read it every day to catch on. I quit my habit of watching the TV in the evenings. When I was reading I needed absolute peace. I couldn't read anything else if I hadn't had my daily portion of your book. It was my last thing each evening. I couldn't read anything else afterwards because it seemed a sacrilege. Deliberately I crumpled the pages. I wrote on it. I highlighted verses. I didn't hesitate to palpate it with greasy fingers. I made it dirty and blotched. I copied long fragments. I took it with me when I went away. I covered it with a plastic binding. It made me shiver and have the creeps. I cried on it.

Solitude

YHWH
The Holy One
Three-Fold
Did not have
To be human

see
your King
comes on a donkey
with no reliance
his crown
only that of
thorns

to apologise on Golgotha

D, can you imagine how it is when you've been yearning for something so strongly, so desperately and for so long that you start doubting its existence. That your life doesn't have any sense without it. I wanted you that way. Or I thought I wanted you. Nevertheless there was this howling inside me waiting to be heard and to be hushed and this partitioned awe and delight waiting to be set free. I've longed for something for all my conscious life and I've never seemed to get any closer to receiving it. So how could I feel when I realised that I

was being offered more than I ever dared to ask, right now, right away

It was as if I've dreamt of somebody for years and suddenly have met this unspeakably beautiful and wonderful person in the street searching for me, picking me out of the crowd, holding me close and saying to me ***"I'm so sorry for all you had to suffer! I love you. You are precious to me. I want to be with you always. I'll do everything for you".***

I've never had the lover I wanted, I was never particularly successful in any area, I was a deep pessimist by nature and I generally regarded my life as rather unhappy.

But now I felt like a millionaire having all this Perfection giving Itself to me.

How many times did I take part in this mystery – transsubstantation, mechanically, without any deeper thought, among others of the congregation of shadows. How many times did I eat this wafer as if it was only a wafer after all

……..the body of Christ…….
……..the blood of Christ…….
……..Amen……..

Instinctively, I've always known it must be there but I couldn't tear it out of this domesticated religiousness, it just didn't work.

It's wildness took me by surprise. All of a sudden I saw that it was not really or not only you, D, that I was craving for. You were only a "little fish", a pretext to go further, to grasp something more important, to experience the greatest romance. I was being accepted, unconditionally, just as I was, by Excellence, by something, somebody most desirable, unutterably delightful, beyond any comparison. What's more, this Eternal Omnipotent Being was longing and craving for my love to the point of renouncing what It

most treasured ! It confined Itself to give me free choice and is now asking for my love!

That's how I understood about Him.

The real wonder was always there, waiting, right inside me. Only You denied me nothing. Neither Your body nor Your blood.

Vacuum was left for thanksgiving.

And thus on one side I had this gigantic heap of all my whys and hows and ifs and nos and nots and all the knowledge, philosophy, theology and the fury that my mind has acquired throughout my whole life and on the other side - there was no tailor made answer or neat explanation

There was only Himself.

ONLY!

Towards the end
of this gloomy day
I realised
that You've been waiting
all time long
to take this weight
from my shoulders

I know there are long gaps in this letter.
I just can't compress these things.
Because I've made a decision.
I've made it seriously.
I take the risk. I stake everything on it.

waiting
has finished

the moments
when I know for sure

when I feel
a mould of fire
around my skin
the heavy caress
right through

nothing
nothing can compare

when the whole world sleeps
cuddle me
cuddle me close
I'll give You my heart
while Your moon's rolling by

I sense Your rapture
when Your newborn sucks
all heaven rejoices
when Your new baby's sealed eyes
open in clumsy bliss

Epilogue

The Twin Towers have fallen. The mythical city I've always wanted to see and I've never had the chance. And now it will never be the same. I pictured myself running and running along this long avenue leading me on and on and on to something that doesn't exist any more. But in my thrilled anticipation I seem not to realise that. I'm passing higher and higher buildings, vermillion skyscrapers – the foretaste of the highest ones - blasphemous and sublime in the vicinity of clouds and water - architecture rising to join the theatre of the elements. How I wanted to feel that place. Another unfulfilled dream? Well, it's just ridiculous in the face of all that suffering.

Inside me something has fallen, too. Although it took so much more time. Human emotions are more resistant than concrete and glass. But now you are gone, D, do you understand? There's only a heap of dying memories. Though a remnant of you will be buried somewhere inside me like a dead nuclear plant you're not dangerous now. You are exorcised. I thank you, D, because somehow, almost as a "byproduct" I found what I'd lost hope of finding..

Remember the still morning at my home I described to you at some place in my letter? You surely don't but I must return to it. The emotions have changed. I have changed.

And I can now notice that the person beside me has open eyes, warm hands. There's also a child, even two of them – powerful realities. They're life embodied. The music's oozing slowly from the CD player like a fire in the fireplace. You can say that, in some sense, every one of us is essentially alone (why do I have to repeat such crap??). But we are here today under the roof of rain. Together.

You know, D, I don't have to write any more. I quit and take to living at last. My youth has been stolen but what is best is still and always before me. I used to wander my part of this planet wailing love songs like feeble signals from a distant star nobody has seen. I was like an android with a body and no soul till I was found and assembled in the arms of my Creator. For the first time in my life reality surpassed my anticipation.

It also doesn't really matter now whether you read it or not. From this place of loss and defeat my victory will begin. Like the darkness over the execution stake of Yeshua turned into the abundance for all mankind. It's no Bible thumping or religious ravings - I guess Adonai hates religion ☺

At first, I couldn't believe I found something that responded to my wildest dreams just like a key to a keyhole. I kept looking for a catch or a trap, any captious issues and I found none. It's as clear as mathematics. Maybe my experience is nothing new, certainly it has

happened before, it may seem like a bunch of meaningless clichés. But every one of us has the right to discover for ourselves. After all, each of us is living life for the first time (tell it to the Hindus...;). For me it **is** new, it **is** unique, it **is** meaningful. Actually, it's the only meaning I have. It's real. I tasted it.

What's He like?
Not too sour
Not too sweet
Not too bitter
Like apple and grapefruit juice
Wistful and intense
Like the calling of shepherds

The world remains the same as it was before though now I know that its visible shape is only a fake, sort of virtual reality just like in "Matrix" or in old Plato's ingenious idea of shadows in a cave. I know that my home is not here, not in this dimension.

I've got so many answers but some questions still beset me. I've experienced almost unbearable delight but some shadows still seem to close in. Yet, I'm not the same any more. I'm a believer. I'm free. Now… now I'm gonna walk on water at His order.